#1444/1445
DEC. 16/23, 2016

**YEAR-END DOUBLE ISSUE!**

# Entertainment WEEKLY

# BEST *& Worst* OF 2016

## *The Top 10* MOVIES, TV, SONGS, BOOKS

**PLUS!**
*The 15*
**ENTERTAINERS**
*of the* **YEAR**

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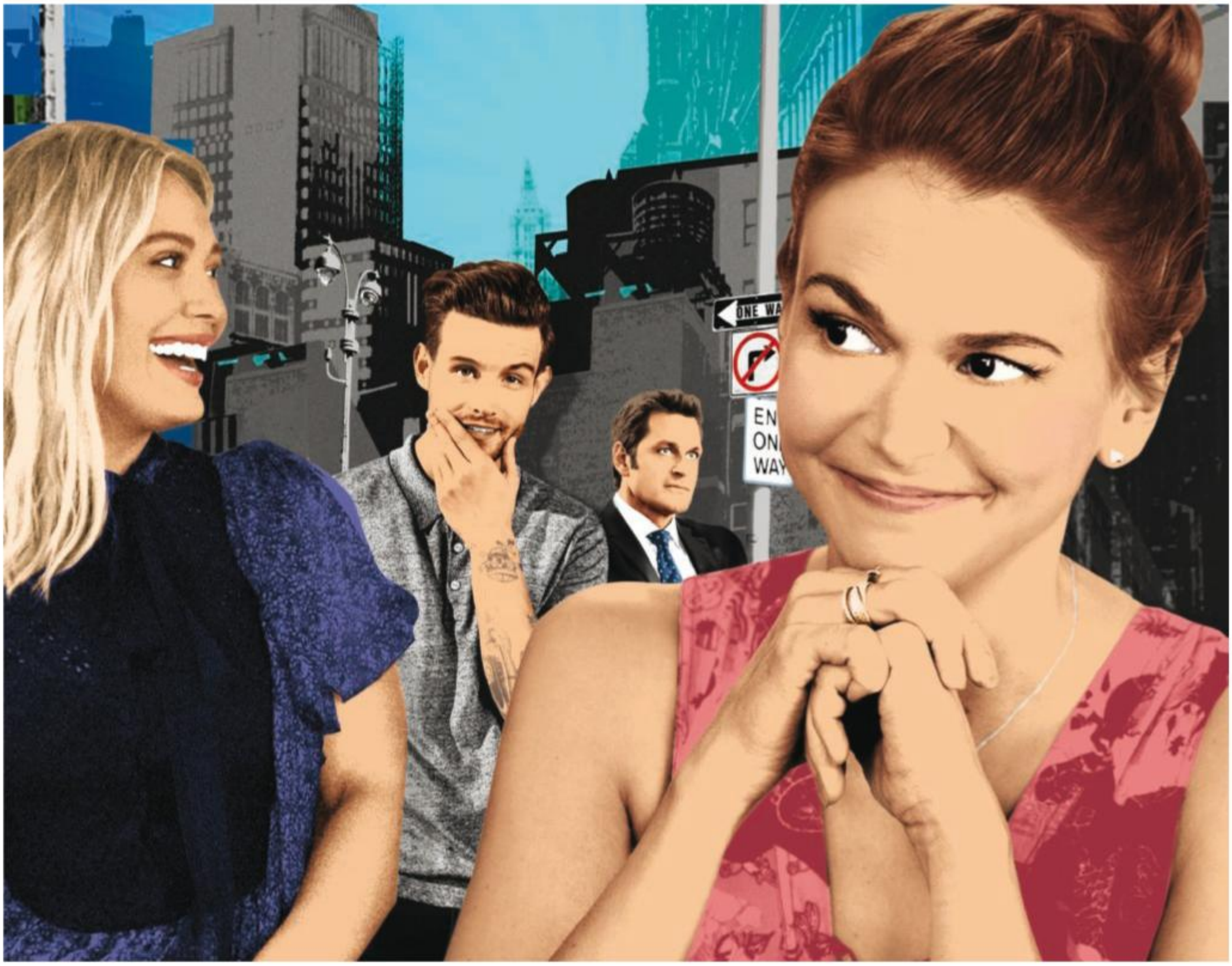
# *The* MUST LIST

## *THE* TOP 10 THINGS WE LOVE THIS WEEK

↓ Hilary Duff, Nico Tortorella, Peter Hermann, and Sutton Foster



No. 1

*TV*

**YOUNGER**

**THIS SWEET (AND SOMETIMES SILLY) SERIES IS MORE CHARMING THAN EVER,** as fortysomething Liza (Sutton Foster) continues her double life as a twentysomething publishing assistant. As season 3 wraps, it's the deep and well-drawn female friendships that keep *Younger* looking dewy and bright-eyed. *(SEASON FINALE AIRS DEC. 14, 10 P.M., TV LAND)*

*YOUNGER*: TV LAND (4)

ILLUSTRATION BY **JOHN RITTER**

2 →
3 →
P. D. JAMES
The Mistletoe Murder
AND OTHER STORIES
With a foreword by Val McDermid
HUMAN MADE
4 →
5 →
The Godfather
THE GODFATHER NOTEBOOK
FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA

**№ 2**

*MUSIC*

### "RUNNIN'"

**Pharrell Williams**

The futuristic performer doubles as producer for songs recorded by Alicia Keys, Janelle Monáe, and Mary J. Blige for the *Hidden Figures* soundtrack, and lends his own vocals to the collection, going charmingly retro on this powerful track.

**№ 3**

*BOOKS*

### THE MISTLETOE MURDER

**P.D. James**

'Tis the season for murder mysteries galore. The late P.D. James' Christmas gift to whodunit lovers comes in the form of four previously uncollected short stories sure to keep you on your toes.

**№ 4**

*MOVIES*

### LA LA LAND

Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone revisit their pitch-perfect chemistry in this dazzling Los Angeles-set musical from *Whiplash* director Damien Chazelle. From its showstopping opening number to the stunning final sequence, you'll leave the theater humming, dancing, and utterly delighted. (*PG-13*)

**№ 5**

*BOOKS*

### THE GODFATHER NOTEBOOK

**Francis Ford Coppola**

What was Francis Ford Coppola thinking when he set out to make *The Godfather*? Now you can read for yourself through his annotations of Mario Puzo's novel, which Coppola adapted to bring the Corleone family to the big screen.

WILLIAMS: DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS/GETTY IMAGES; *LA LA LAND*: DALE ROBINETTE

AND THEY SAY YOU CAN'T BUY GOOD TASTE
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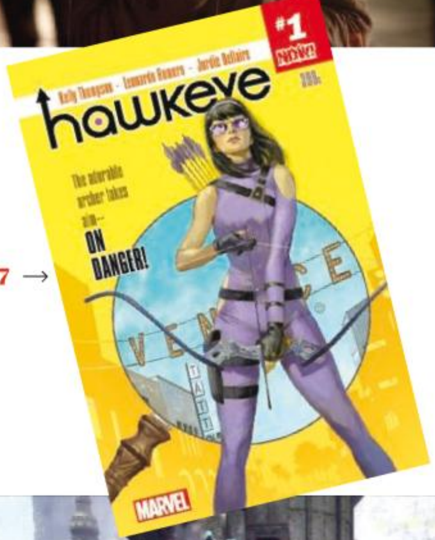
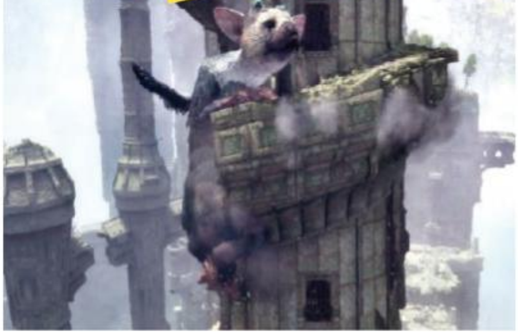
6 →

7 →


#1
NOW!
399
Kelly Thompson · Leonardo Romero · Jordie Bellaire
hawkeye
The adorable archer takes aim— ON DANGER!
MARVEL

8 →



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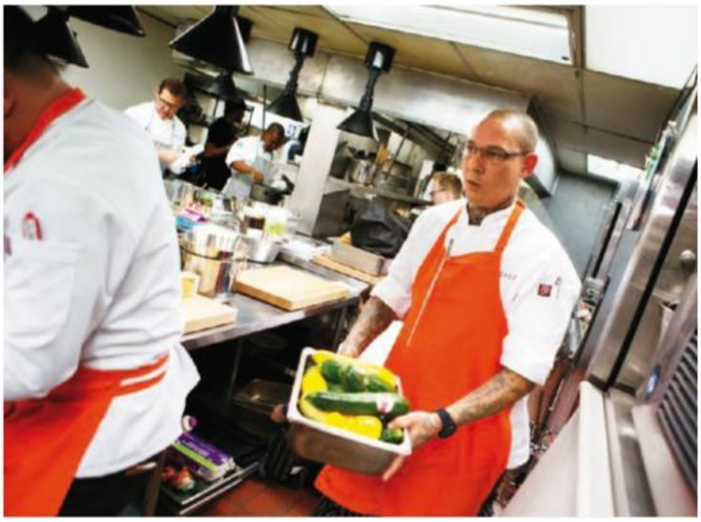

№ 6

TV

**THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE**

The alternate-history dystopian thriller debuts a faster-paced season 2, with pulse-pounding spy stories and moral battles for every character. Yes, even John Smith (Rufus Sewell) must contend with the Reich's reign. (*Dec. 16, Amazon*)

№ 7

COMICS

**HAWKEYE #1**

It's *Veronica Mars* meets Marvel with a huge dose of fun, as this Kate Bishop solo series sees the former Young Avenger take on the title of Hawkeye, while also solving crimes as a California-based PI.

№ 8

GAMES

**THE LAST GUARDIAN**

It's been a long time coming, but *The Last Guardian* was worth the wait. This gorgeous adventure about a boy trying to escape imprisonment with the aid of one truly fantastic beast is a moving, memorable journey through a crumbling, forgotten world.

№ 9

MUSIC

**"PEACE TRAIL"**

**Neil Young**

Other than the occasional pinch of Auto-Tune—better than it sounds on paper, promise!—the rocker's 38th studio album is refreshingly back to basics, and contains some of his sharpest lyrics in years.

№ 10

TV

**TOP CHEF**

The venerable competition series adds some spice to its recipe in season 14. Set in Charleston, S.C., the new episodes kick off with eight rookies and eight *Top Chef* veterans, including season 2's Sam Talbot and season 3's Casey Thompson. (*Thursdays, 10 p.m., Bravo*)

*THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE*: LIANE HENTSCHER/AMAZON STUDIOS; YOUNG: JAY BLAKESBERG; *HAWKEYE #1*: MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT; *TOP CHEF*: PAUL CHENEY/BRAVO

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THE YEAR-END EDITION

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← OMG, did you hear who EW named 2016's Entertainer of the Year?

MICHAEL MULLER/FOX

**ON THE COVER** DORY: PIXAR/DISNEY; GAL GADOT: CLAY ENOS/WARNER BROS.; ELLIE KEMPER: MATTHIAS CLAMER/NETFLIX; KANYE WEST: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE; *LA LA LAND*: DALE ROBINETTE/LIONSGATE; *ANGRY BIRDS*: ROVIO ANIMATION; *ZOOTOPIA, MOANA*: DISNEY (2); *DOCTOR STRANGE*: JAY MAIDMENT/DISNEY; SARAH PAULSON: RAY MICKSHAW/FX; *WESTWORLD*: JOHN P. JOHNSON/HBO; *LUKE CAGE*: PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHIAS CLAMER; RACHEL BLOOM: ROBERT VOETS/THE CW; *THIS IS US*: ART STREIBER; SAMANTHA BEE: ERIC RAY DAVIDSON; ANNA FARIS: KENNETH CAPPELLO; *SNL*: DANA EDELSON/NBC/NBCU PHOTO BANK VIA GETTY IMAGES; ADELE: GARETH CATTERMOLE/GETTY IMAGES; DRAKE: NOEL VASQUEZ/GC IMAGES; *STRANGER THINGS*: CURTIS BAKER/NETFLIX; *THE WALKING DEAD*: GENE PAGE/AMC (2); FRANK OCEAN: JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/AP IMAGES; VIOLA DAVIS: TODD WILLIAMSON/GETTY IMAGES; EDDIE REDMAYNE: JAAP BUITENDIJK/WARNER BROS.; BEYONCE: JOHN SHEARER/GETTY IMAGES FOR MTV.COM; *SNL*: WILL HEATH/NBC/NBCU PHOTO BANK VIA GETTY IMAGES (2); RYAN REYNOLDS: PETER KRAMER/BRAVO/NBCU PHOTO BANK VIA GETTY IMAGES; KEVIN HART: ART STREIBER; *GILMORE GIRLS*: ALEXEI HAY (2); *SUPERGIRL*: DIYAH PERA/THE CW; *SUPERNATURAL*: MATTHIAS CLAMER; *OUTLANDER*: STARZ ENTERTAINMENT/SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT; DARTH VADER: JONATHAN OLLEY/© LUCASFILM LFL 2016; *SUICIDE SQUAD*: WARNER BROS.; *GAME OF THRONES*: HELEN SLOAN/HBO; AZIZ ANSARI: K.C. BAILEY/NETFLIX; *HAMILTON*: BRUCE GLIKAS/BRUCE GLIKAS/FILMMAGIC; *ATLANTA*: GUY D'ALEMA/FX; J.K. ROWLING: MIKE MARSLAND/WIREIMAGE CHANCE THE RAPPER: NICHOLAS HUNT/FILMMAGIC; *THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS*: ILLUMINATION ENTERTAINMENT AND UNIVERSAL PICTURES

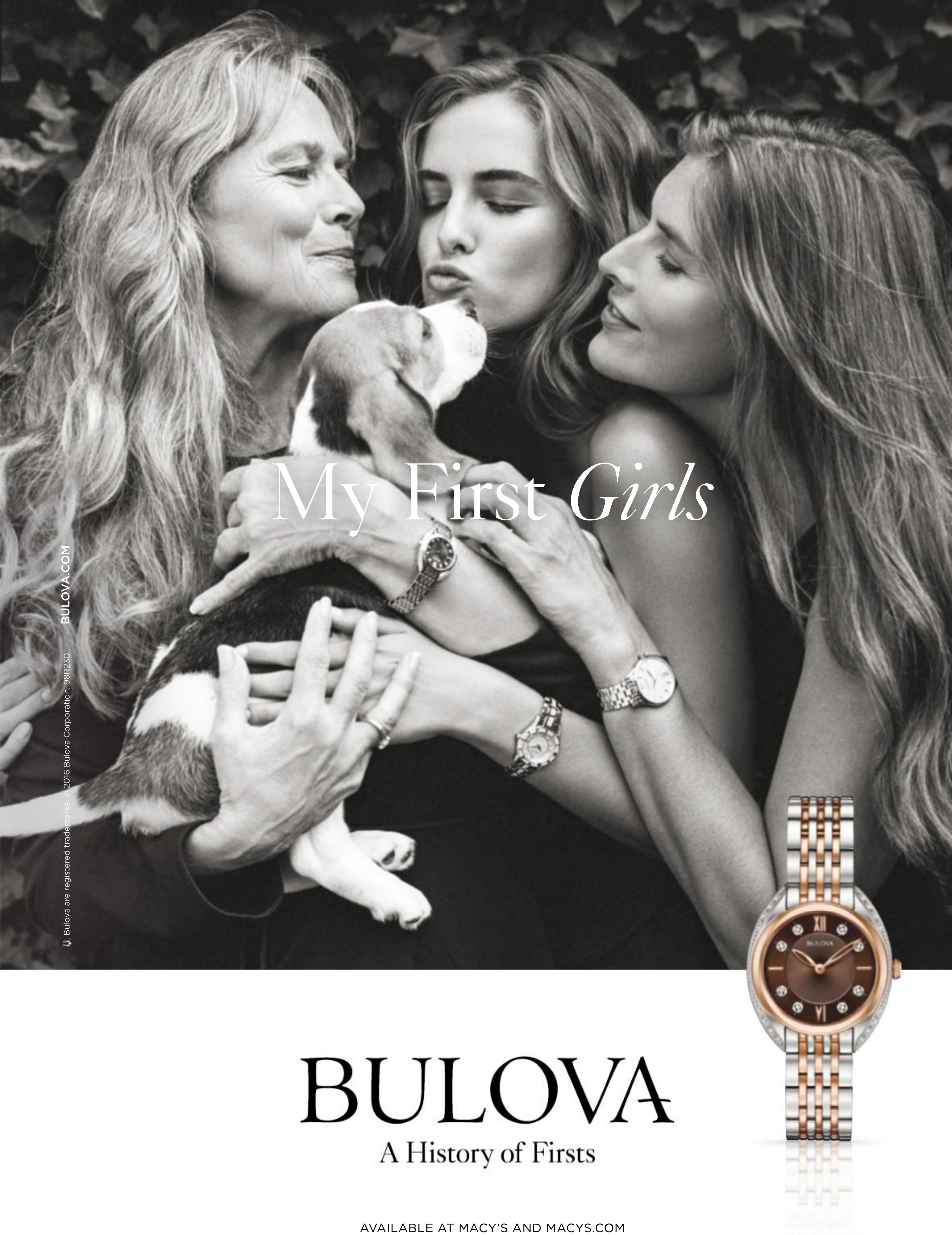
# FROM *the* STAFF

# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

After you've devoured this issue, be sure to check out all of our expanded coverage. At *ew.com/yearend*, you'll find interviews with our Entertainers of the Year and exclusive photo galleries, as well as tons of video clips celebrating the past 12 months. Over at EW Radio (SiriusXM Channel 105), we kick off Top 10 Week on Dec. 12 with special episodes of all our shows, including *EW Morning Live* and *LA Daily*. Plus, tune in Dec. 26 at 10 a.m. as Tim Stack, Bill Keith, and Jessica Shaw break down the year's best and worst in pop culture for a two-hour *Bullseye*. Finally, you can stream *Entertainment Weekly: The Show*'s "Best & Worst of 2016" episode on PEN (the People/Entertainment Weekly Network), which is available at *people.com/pen* or by downloading the PEN app on Apple TV, Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Xumo, Chromecast, Xfinity, iOS, and Android devices.

↑ **EW'S NEW YORK STAFF PICTURED ABOVE.** Members of our L.A. bureau (Natalie Abrams, Casey Armijo, Anthony Breznican, Noelene Clark, Darren Franich, Gerrad Hall, James Hibberd, Madeline Hill, Jeff Jensen, Christy Kamimura, Brittany Kaplan, Richard Maltz, Gina McIntyre, Audrey Meaney, Kelsey Pennell, Lynette Rice, Lisa Simpson Briel, C. Molly Smith, Marc Snetiker, Dan Snierson, and Nicole Sperling) are not pictured, but they send season's greetings, too!

PHOTOGRAPH BY **PHILIP FRIEDMAN**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***THE*** **YEAR'S BEST**

# SOUND BITES

**"They're not gonna cancel the Oscars because I quit! And the last thing I need is to lose another job to Kevin Hart, okay?"**

Host **Chris Rock**, on why he stuck by the Academy amid the #OscarsSoWhite controversy, in his opening monologue

**"Well, I prefer the word[s] 'one of the greatest athletes of all time.' "**

**Serena Williams**, responding to a reporter who said she'd go down as one of the greatest female athletes of all time, after her Wimbledon win

**"It makes me smile the way every year we drink to the future, whatever it may bring."**

The Dowager Countess (**Maggie Smith**) in *Downton Abbey*'s series finale

**"He better call Becky with the good hair."**

**Beyoncé**, making a not-so-subtle reference to her marriage to Jay Z, on "Sorry"

**"Just one note: Drop the *The*. Just *Gilmore Girls*. It's cleaner."**

Lorelai (**Lauren Graham**), advising Rory (Alexis Bledel) on the title of her book, on *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*

**"Not in that onesie, you're not."**

Tony Stark (**Robert Downey Jr.**), when Peter Parker (Tom Holland) says he's going to call himself "Spider-Man," in *Captain America: Civil War*

ROCK: KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES; BEYONCE: LARRY BUSACCA/PW/WIREIMAGE; SMITH: NICK BRIGGS/PBS; GRAHAM: SAEED ADYANI/NETFLIX; WILLIAMS: KARWAI TANG/WIREIMAGE; DOWNEY: MICHAEL MULLER; HARINGTON: HELEN SLOAN/HBO; TIMBERLAKE: MIKE MARSLAND/WIREIMAGE; JONES: GREGG DEGUIRE/WIREIMAGE; GADOT: CLAY ENOS/© 2014 WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT INC., RATPAC-DUNE ENTERTAINMENT LLC AND RATPAC ENTERTAINMENT, LLC; WASHINGTON: GREG GAYNE/ABC; *THE GOOD WIFE*: JUSTIN STEPHENS/CBS (2); SWIFT: GEORGE PIMENTEL/LP5/GETTY IMAGES FOR TAS

**"I got that sunshine in my pocket."**

**Justin Timberlake** in his dance-floor hit "Can't Stop the Feeling!"

**"Don't nobody wanna know about boring Emmy secrets. But since you good at keeping things safe, I got a job for you—my Twitter account!"**

**Leslie Jones**, to the Ernst & Young accountants, at the Emmys

**"Oh, I don't think you've ever known a woman like me."**

Diana Prince (**Gal Gadot**), to Bruce Wayne (Ben Affleck), in *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*

**"I would very much like to be excluded from this narrative, one that I have never asked to be a part of, since 2009."**

**Taylor Swift**, after Kim Kardashian leaked a phone call between the singer and Kanye West about his song "Famous"

**"You don't get revenge. That's mine."**

Olivia Pope (**Kerry Washington**), right before the much-talked-about head-bashing scene, on *Scandal*

**"Hold off on burning my body for now."**

Jon Snow (**Kit Harington**) on *Game of Thrones*

**"I'll love you forever."**

Alicia (**Julianna Margulies**)

**"I'm okay with that."**

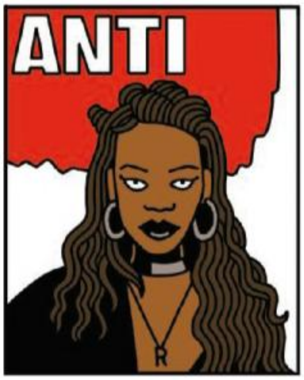
Will (**Josh Charles**) in *The Good Wife* series finale

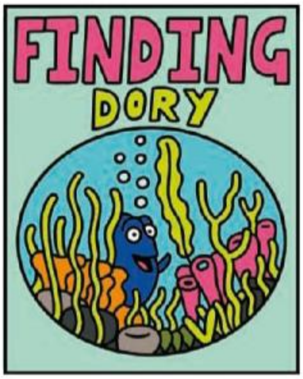
BEST + WORST

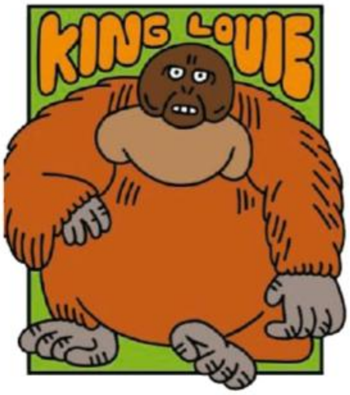
# The YEAR THAT WAS

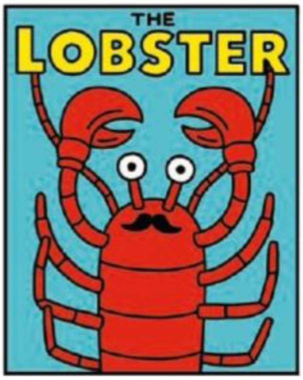
From Rihanna's highly anticipated *Anti* to the fur-tastic film *Zootopia*, a taxonomy of the pop culture that got us talking and tweeting in 2016.

*ILLUSTRATIONS BY* **SERGE SEIDLITZ**




FINDING
DORY




THE
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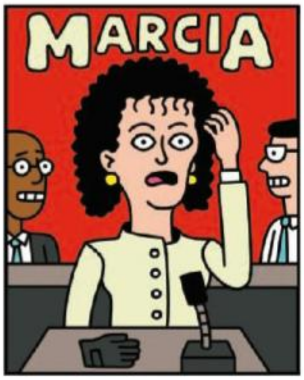
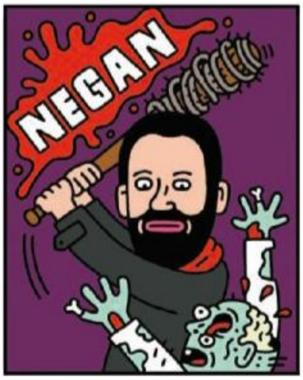
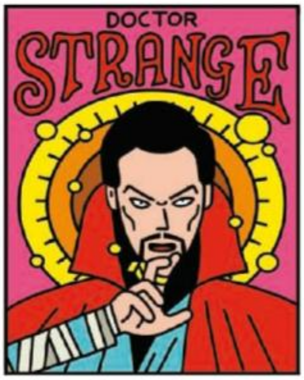
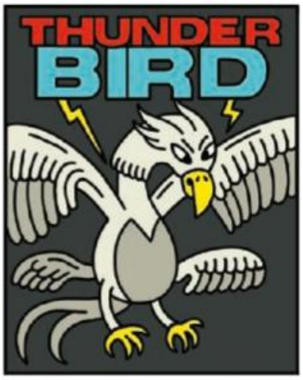
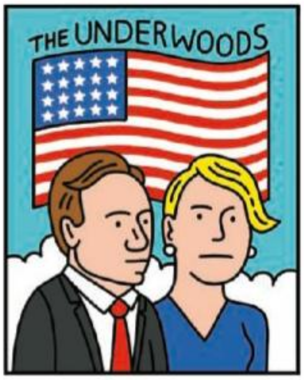
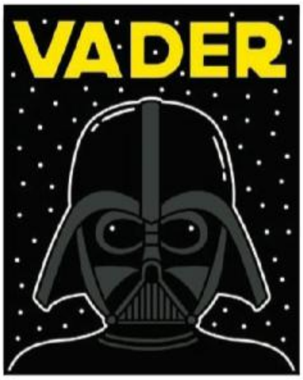


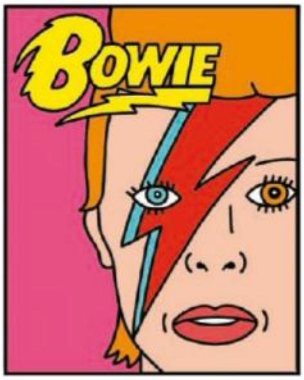



DOCTOR
STRANGE


THUNDER
BIRD


THE UNDERWOODS

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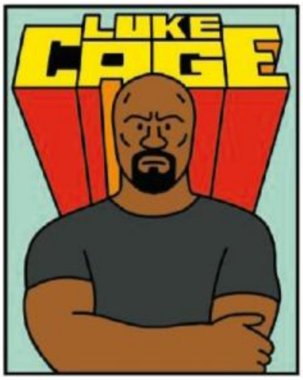
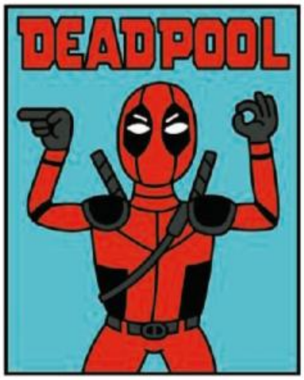

LUKE CAGE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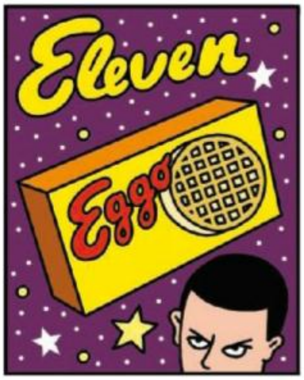
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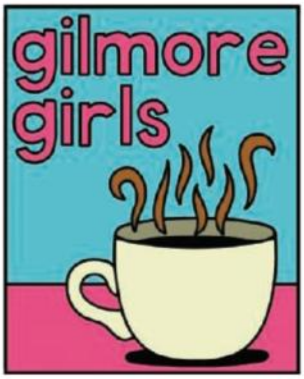
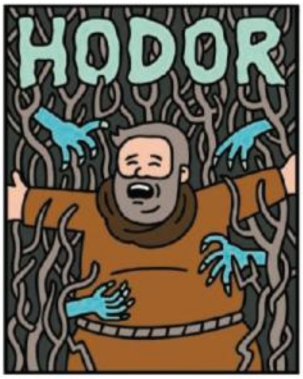
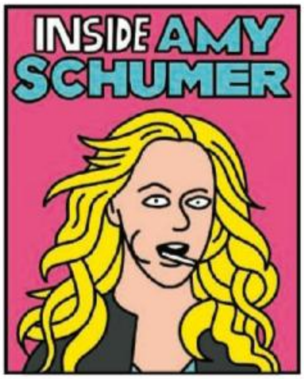
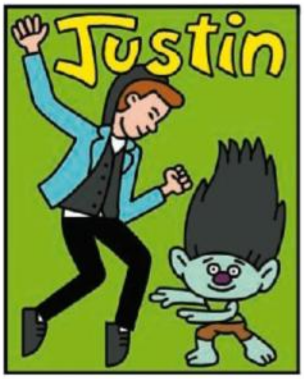
Eggo


gilmore girls


HODOR


INSIDE AMY SCHUMER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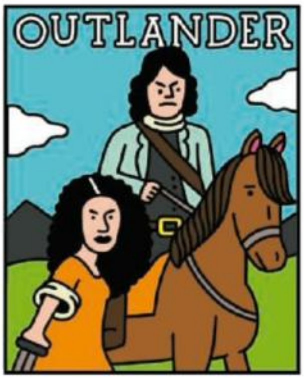
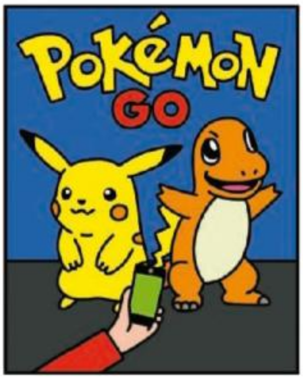

OUTLANDER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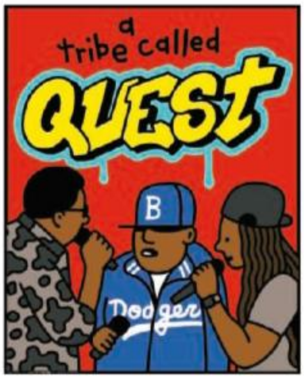
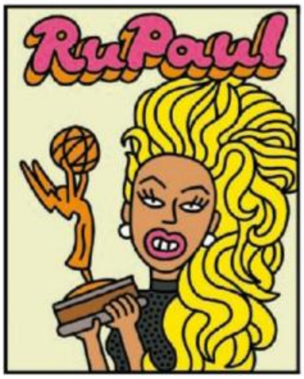
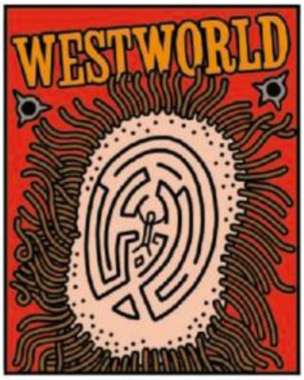
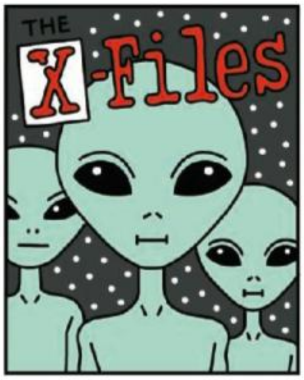
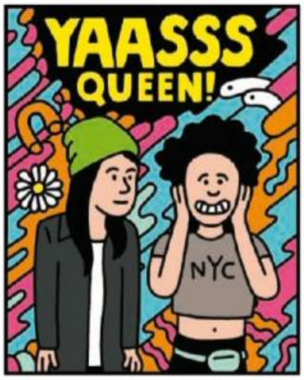
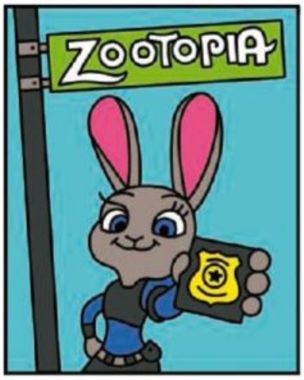

a tribe called QUEST
B
Dodgers


RuPaul


WESTWORLD


THE X-Files


YAASSS QUEEN!
NYC


ZOOTOPIA

ENTERTAINER *of the* YEAR

# RYAN REYNOLDS

How he rocketed to the top of the A list with his smart-ass superhero **Deadpool** and ravaged the comic-book movie genre in a single profane bound.

By TIM STACK @EWTimStack

***Plus!***
*14 Other Super-Talents Who Soared In 2016*

***Including*** BEYONCÉ, **EMMA STONE**, KEVIN HART, **VIOLA DAVIS**, THE *STRANGER THINGS* KIDS **& *more***

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**YEAR AWARD**
ON THE **CRITICS' CHOICE AWARDS**
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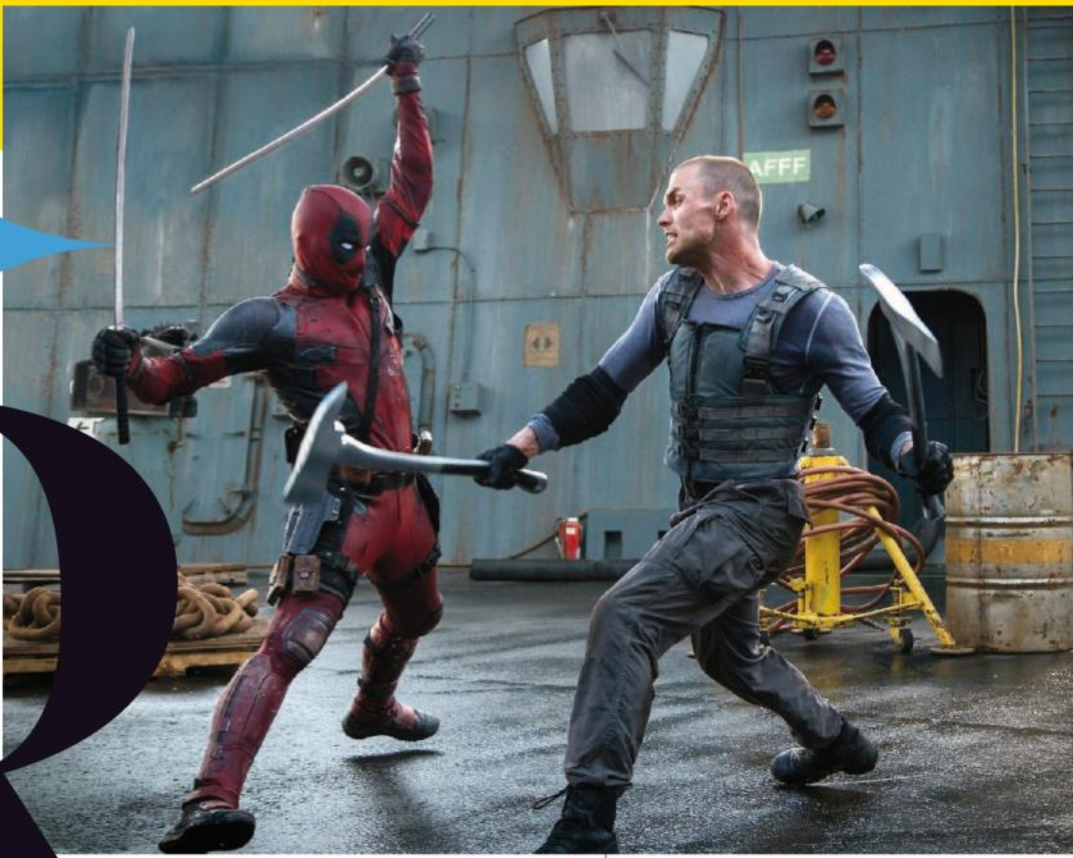


↑ Deadpool (Ryan Reynolds) and Ajax (Ed Skrein) have an ax to grind—or two

**RYAN REYNOLDS ISN'T MADE OF STONE. IT'S A RAINY AFTERNOON IN NEW** York a few days after Thanksgiving, and the actor is ruminating on his holiday...and getting a little reflective. "I hate to sound overly sentimental, but I had a good year," he says. He and wife Blake Lively welcomed their second daughter in September. "I have great kids under 2, so that's the kind of stuff you focus on." Awww. So sweet. "The rest of the year they're dead to me."

Reynolds, 40, brought that signature smart-ass humor to *Deadpool*, a subversive, profane adaptation of the Marvel comic about mutant mercenary Wade Wilson. It's a passion project that Reynolds labored to get off the ground for 11 years. "He is Deadpool in a way that I have not ever quite seen an actor be and create a character," says the film's producer Simon Kinberg (*X-Men: Apocalypse*). "The humor, the tone, the pathos came from Ryan in a very organic and almost unconscious way." The movie opened to a record-breaking $132 million in February and became the highest-grossing X-Men universe film of all time, with $783 million worldwide. (*Deadpool 2* is currently in preproduction.) Reynolds, who will next be seen in March's sci-fi thriller *Life*, talked to EW about bringing the Merc With a Mouth to the big screen, becoming a father again, and spending our nation's birthday with Taylor Swift.

**When you were making *Deadpool*, did you have any idea it would be so huge?**

No way. I knew that this was going to speak to the very core of the *Deadpool* fan base, and I knew they would embrace it. I think it just really landed at a fortunate time. We were right at "peak superhero," particularly in the sense that the superheroes were all intermittently clenching their jaw muscles and brooding. *Deadpool* came along and sort of threw all that on its ass.

**Salt-N-Pepa's "Shoop" is quite a presence in the film. Who chose that song?**

The "Shoop" idea came because what we had written into the script we couldn't afford, which was "Hollaback Girl" by Gwen Stefani. We got "Shoop" instead because it was less expensive, but also it was so much better for the movie.

**After Wade Wilson is transformed into Deadpool, he battles Ajax in**

(PREVIOUS SPREAD) MATTHEW BROOKES TRUNK ARCHIVE; (THIS PAGE) JOE LEDERER/TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

**the buff. Are you actually naked in that scene?**
Sometimes I am. In certain shots I'm wearing a codpiece, and other shots you can't do much about it.

**I'm pretty sure I saw some Deadpool private parts.**
Yeah, there are flicks of Deadpool peen in there. If you're at home with your DVR, you can freeze-frame that.

**Do you have a favorite Deadpool line that didn't make it?**
Blind Al (Leslie Uggams) says something about our duplex we live in. I say, "This isn't a duplex—it's hepatitis holding still." That was one of my favorite lines, which is sorta slightly stolen from *Funny Farm*: "This ain't a bridge—it's termites holding hands." So I can't take credit for it.

**Truth: Do you understand all the X-Men timelines?**
Absolutely not. And I will exploit that further in the next movie.

**I would love to see Wolverine in a Deadpool movie.**
I want Deadpool and Wolverine in a movie together! What we're going to have to do is convince Hugh [Jackman]. If anything, I'm going to need to do what I can to get my internet friends to help rally another cause.

**You spent the Fourth of July at Taylor Swift's house, and there's a photo of you on her porch that went viral because you looked so unhappy. Were you upset?**
No, that's a problem I've had all my life. If I'm not aware a photo is being taken, my natural resting face is one of a man dying. I had no idea somebody was taking a photo. Therefore I was resting comfortably in my persona of a man whose soul is visibly exiting this earth.

**You and Blake welcomed a second daughter in September. How is it having two kids under 2 years old?**
What you can't see under the table right now is I'm quickly giving myself a home vasectomy. You may see some veins bulge out of my neck, but that's just the pain. [Another child] is everything they say it is: It's twice as hard and twice as great.

> "*DEADPOOL* CAME ALONG AND SORT OF THREW THAT BROODING-SUPERHERO CLICHÉ ON ITS ASS."

↓ Reynolds and Lively attended a state dinner at the White House on March 10, 2016

RON SACHS/POOL/EPA/REDUX

**But you haven't publicly revealed her name. Will you someday?**
Yeah, I'm sure. I'm not hiding anything—I just don't yell it out in an interview. Your kids don't sign up for that stuff, and I don't want to be the guy that's the engine behind their names being printed.

**Your father passed away last year. Does that make success bittersweet?**
*Deadpool* exceeded all of my wildest expectations, and I think my dad would have gotten a kick out of that. I would have loved my dad to meet our newborn. I'm getting a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame [this month], and I know something like that would have hit my dad hard. Your parents are there to kind of remind you to smell the flowers, and that doesn't always happen when they're gone. Those are the moments I miss my dad. And my father and I had one of the most complicated, fraught relationships I've ever had in my life, but at the same time I think some of these things would have been pretty important to him.

**Do you know where your star is located?**
I don't know! I'm very excited that I get to spend eternity just being hosed in urine and s---! But it is a big deal. I remember the first time I went to Hollywood and I walked down that street. I never in my wildest dreams imagined I would have one there. I'm pretty touched by the fact that I get to be part of that.

**How can you top 2016?**
Hmm. I'm going to cure a terminal disease. I have to go. ◆

# Lin-Manuel Miranda

THE *HAMILTON* MASTERMIND, 36, DIDN'T JUST DOMINATE BROADWAY—HE STRETCHED HIS INFLUENCE TO THE GRAMMYS, *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*, AND BEYOND

**Let's start at the end: You finished the year by releasing the star-studded *Hamilton Mixtape*.**
This caps the end of an insane year. I'm out! I'm out of *Hamilton* things to give you! There was the mixtape! There's *Drunk History*! There was a book! The show itself! I feel like *Hamilton* was a giant boulder we threw in a pond, and the *Mixtape* is the last ripple coming back.

**How was your emotional hangover after departing *Hamilton* in July?**
It was delayed because I immediately went into the studio with J. Lo to raise money for Orlando victims. Once that was done, I went away and just floated. Any hangover I felt was outweighed by the relief of tucking my [2-year-old] kid into bed, a pleasure I had been denied for about a year. And now that's my favorite part of my day, every day.

**Next year you'll shoot *Mary Poppins Returns* and start work on *The Little Mermaid* and *The Kingkiller Chronicle*. What will you *not* do?**
Host anything. I get offers, [but] that's a slightly different skill set than what I have. I'm much more comfortable behind the scenes.

**Where did you put your Grammy?**
I still don't have it! Maybe it got lost in the mail.

**Name one piece of criticism from this year that you actually loved.**
I get it every day: "Stop blowing up my phone with notifications." The next musical I write, you're not going to see for many years, so social media is the creative runoff. I tweet too much. The most valid criticism is just "Shut the f--- up!" *—Marc Snetiker*

MIRANDA: TRUNK ARCHIVE; BEE: PETER YANG/TBS

# SAMANTHA BEE

DURING A CRAZY ELECTION YEAR, THE *FULL FRONTAL* HOST (AND HER BLAZERS!) SERVED AS A MUCH-NEEDED VOICE OF REASON

For the first time in more than a decade, Bee, 47, wasn't a correspondent on *The Daily Show*. Instead, she launched her own critically acclaimed satirical news series, *Full Frontal With Samantha Bee*, on TBS. And what a year it was to talk politics.

### ROLLING WITH THE PUNCHES

"It was good to do the extra show on election week. But I wouldn't choose to do that all the time. It was extremely challenging because we had planned a show, and then the unexpected happened, so we had to create something brand-new overnight basically, responding in real time to something that no one thought was going to happen. I'm proud of being able to pull a show together in such short order."

### FINDING FANS IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

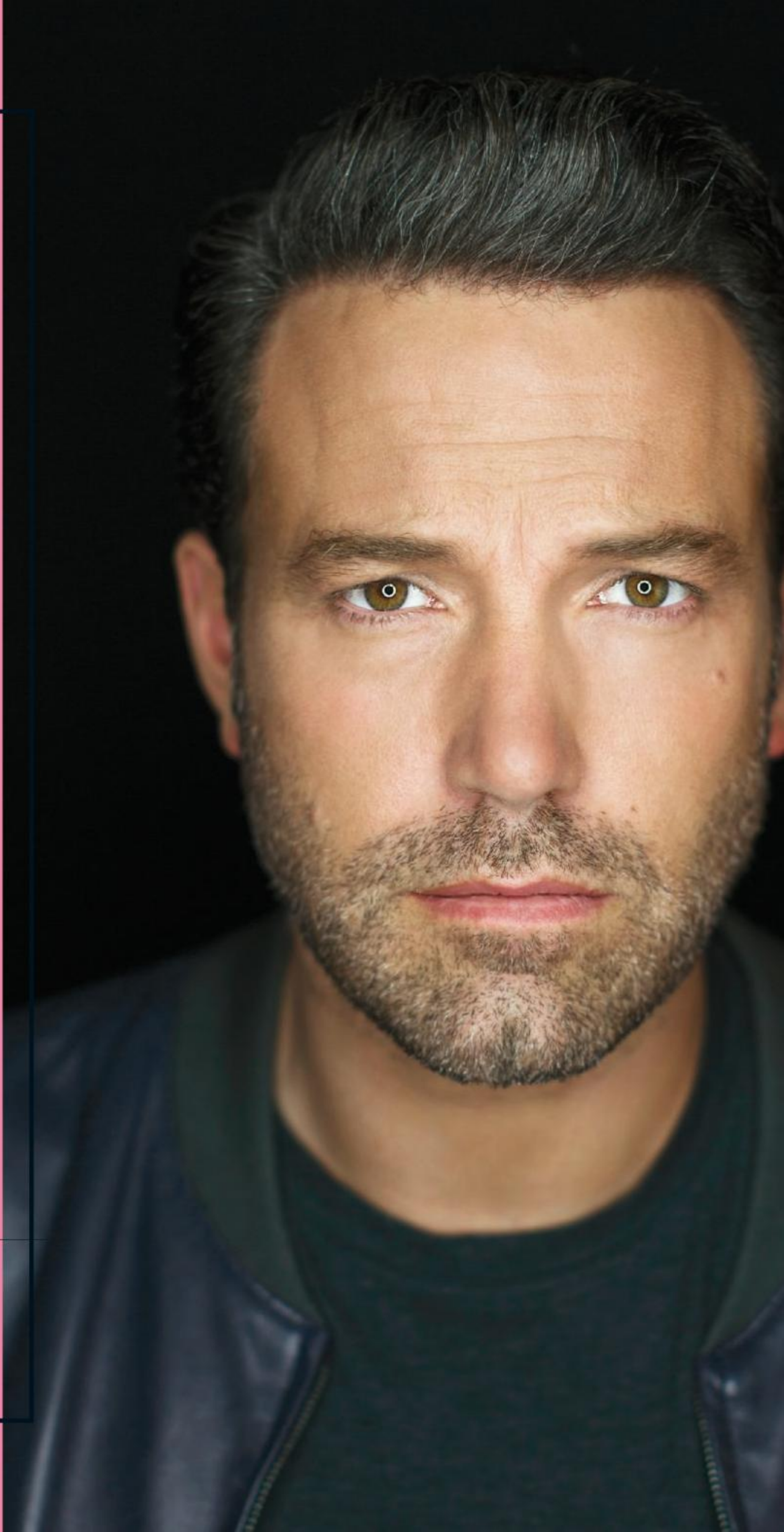
"I've had so many pleasant interactions—really edifying, pleasant, wonderful experiences with people. You know, at the RNC this year we had so many Republicans who told us they watch the show and find it funny! I really appreciated that. Republicans can take a joke—that's a good thing."

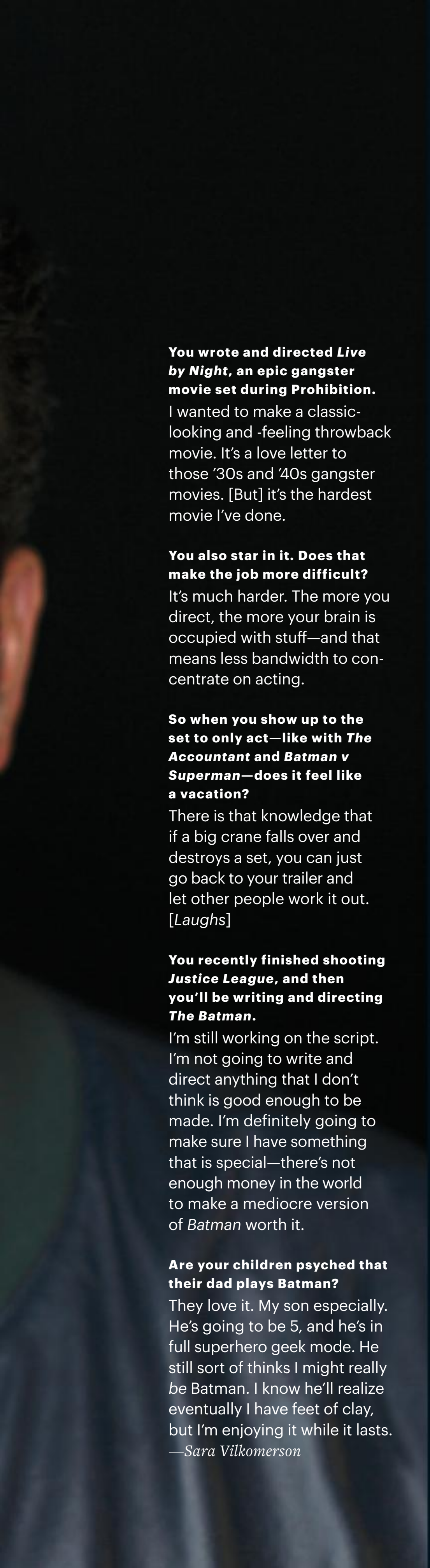
### EMBRACING HER LOVE OF BLAZERS

"I personally love them, but it's not like we all sat around and went, Oh, what statement can we make by the outfits I choose? I just naturally always wear blazers. My whole closet is blazers. I wore them before. I'll wear them after. I'm sure I'll be buried in one. Maybe I'll try some non-blazer outfits next year. I probably will have to. There aren't that many blazers in this world that fit me well!" *—Ray Rahman*

# Ben Affleck

THE ACTOR-DIRECTOR, 44, LANDED AN IMPRESSIVE THREE-PEAT WITH THE MOVIES *LIVE BY NIGHT*, *THE ACCOUNTANT*, AND—HATERS BE DAMNED—*BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE*





**You wrote and directed *Live by Night*, an epic gangster movie set during Prohibition.**
I wanted to make a classic-looking and -feeling throwback movie. It's a love letter to those '30s and '40s gangster movies. [But] it's the hardest movie I've done.

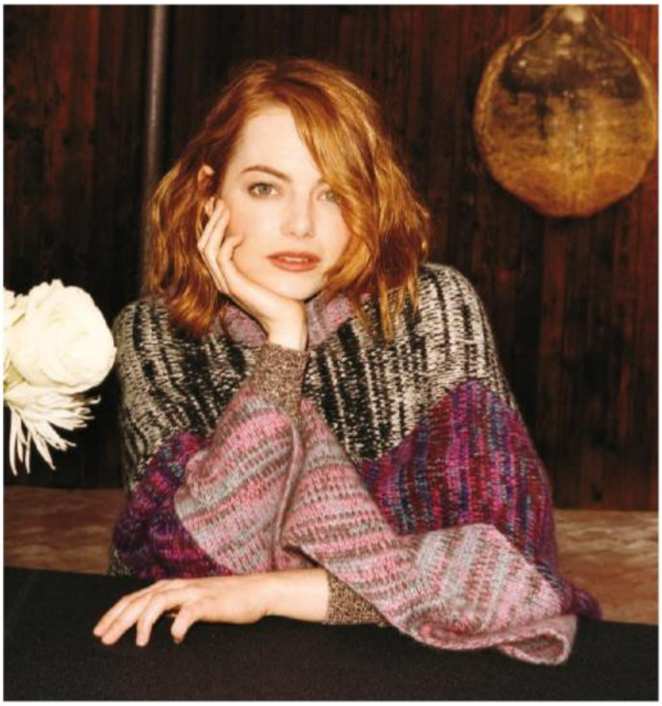
**You also star in it. Does that make the job more difficult?**
It's much harder. The more you direct, the more your brain is occupied with stuff—and that means less bandwidth to concentrate on acting.

**So when you show up to the set to only act—like with *The Accountant* and *Batman v Superman*—does it feel like a vacation?**
There is that knowledge that if a big crane falls over and destroys a set, you can just go back to your trailer and let other people work it out. [*Laughs*]

**You recently finished shooting *Justice League*, and then you'll be writing and directing *The Batman*.**
I'm still working on the script. I'm not going to write and direct anything that I don't think is good enough to be made. I'm definitely going to make sure I have something that is special—there's not enough money in the world to make a mediocre version of *Batman* worth it.

**Are your children psyched that their dad plays Batman?**
They love it. My son especially. He's going to be 5, and he's in full superhero geek mode. He still sort of thinks I might really *be* Batman. I know he'll realize eventually I have feet of clay, but I'm enjoying it while it lasts. *—Sara Vilkomerson*

AFFLECK: TODD PLITT/CONTOUR/GETTY IMAGES; STONE: ANGELO PENNETTA/TRUNK ARCHIVE



# EMMA STONE

IN THE MAGICAL *LA LA LAND*, THE TRIPLE-THREAT STAR PLAYS A PLUCKY ASPIRING ACTRESS AND DELIVERS A CAREER-DEFINING PERFORMANCE

**SINCE HER DEBUT AS** Jonah Hill's sweet high school crush in 2007's *Superbad*, Emma Stone has applied her breathy Bacall voice, curious cat eyes, innate playfulness, and genuine grit to fully realized young women in *Easy A*, *The Help*, *Zombieland*, *Crazy, Stupid, Love,* and her Oscar-nominated part in *Birdman*. But her role as a struggling actress named Mia in Damien Chazelle's joyous musical romance *La La Land* (see page 49) is quite simply a career best. And it's a performance that Stone, 28, admits she couldn't have delivered even a few years ago. "[Mia] has scars and she's been through things," she says. "The maturity of the character was very important to me."

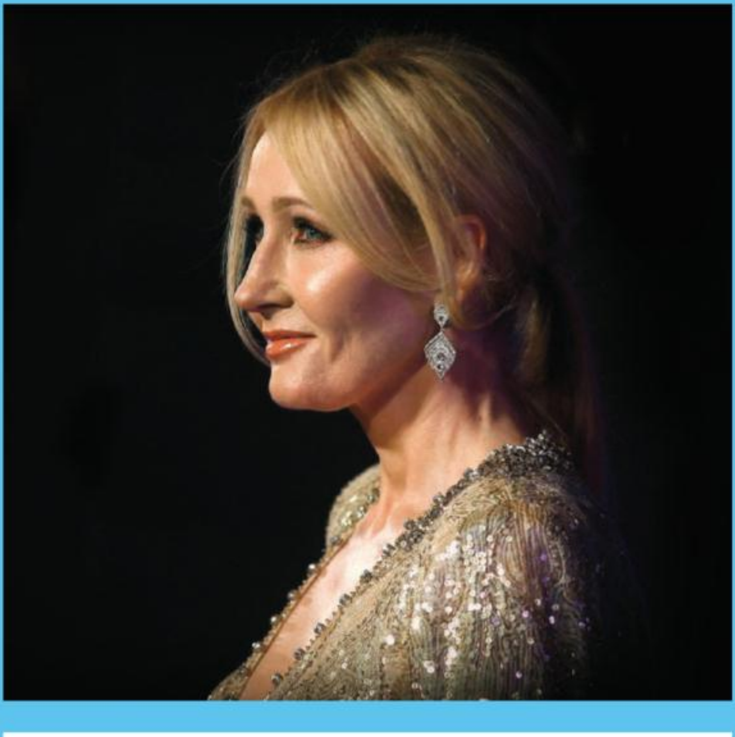
Stone's wondrous mixture of melancholy and hopefulness, not to mention her singing and dancing, has placed her on a short list of Oscar contenders. And though Stone is quick to self-deprecate—"I can tell you all the things I should've done differently"—she's enjoyed watching herself in *La La Land*. Maybe a little too much. Recently, she's found herself humming the movie's song "City of Stars"...in public bathrooms. "After these screenings I've been to, the song's stuck in my head, so there's me singing it next to people using the facilities. Not too humiliating, huh?" *—Joe McGovern*

# Kevin Hart

ROOKIE COP, CPA, VERY BAD RABBIT: THERE WAS NO ROLE THE COMEDIAN COULDN'T TURN TO GOLD ON SCREEN—AND NO SIDE HUSTLE IN ENTERTAINMENT HE COULDN'T MASTER

**IT MIGHT TAKE LESS TIME TO** enumerate what Kevin Hart *didn't* do this year, but here for your review is an abridged list of highlights: Bring in more than half a billion dollars at the box office between *Ride Along 2*, *Central Intelligence*, and *The Secret Life of Pets*? Check. Sign to Motown and release a mixtape to accompany the feature-length stand-up *Kevin Hart: What Now?* under the alias Chocolate Droppa? Yep. Star in high-profile ad campaigns for H&M (with buddy-slash-brother-from-a-blonder-mother David Beckham) and Nike (with a supremely patient Serena Williams)? Done and done. "It's been incredible," the 37-year-old acknowledges, calling in from the Atlanta set of *Jumanji*, due next year. Though the proudest achievements, he says, are more personal: marrying longtime love Eniko Parrish in August; receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; and connecting with a whole new pint-size audience via *Pets*' irascible animated rabbit, Snowball. "Just seeing kids' reactions, I *love* that," says the father of two. One disappointment: His close friend and two-time costar Dwayne Johnson snaking *People*'s Sexiest Man Alive title. "That's some bulls---," Hart says, laughing. "I demand a recount!" But more film and TV projects abound for 2017, and a few non-showbiz goals, too: "I really want to try to run a marathon." Why not? He's already won the race.
*—Leah Greenblatt*

HART PHOTOGRAPH BY **ART STREIBER**



ROWLING: MIKE MARSLAND/WIREIMAGE

# J.K. ROWLING

THE AUTHOR MAY CLAIM HER WIZARD IS DONE, BUT FROM THE STAGE PLAY *HARRY POTTER AND THE CURSED CHILD* TO HER SPELLBINDING NARRATIVE CLUES ON TWITTER, IT'S AS IF SHE'S JUST GETTING STARTED

**IF IT FEELS LIKE THERE'S MORE** Harry Potter than ever, you can thank J.K. Rowling, the patron scribe of ceaseless magic who allayed the woes of the real world by letting readers apparate into unseen spheres of her wizarding world. The author and political activist compounded her own canon in 2016 with several surprising entries: the jaw-dropping stage play sequel (and comparably captivating published script) *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, November's nascent *Fantastic Beasts* series (the first of a five-film franchise, it's already cashed in over half a billion dollars worldwide), and enough interstitial additions to Hogwarts lore via Twitter and Pottermore.com to keep fans spellbound for at least two *more* decades.

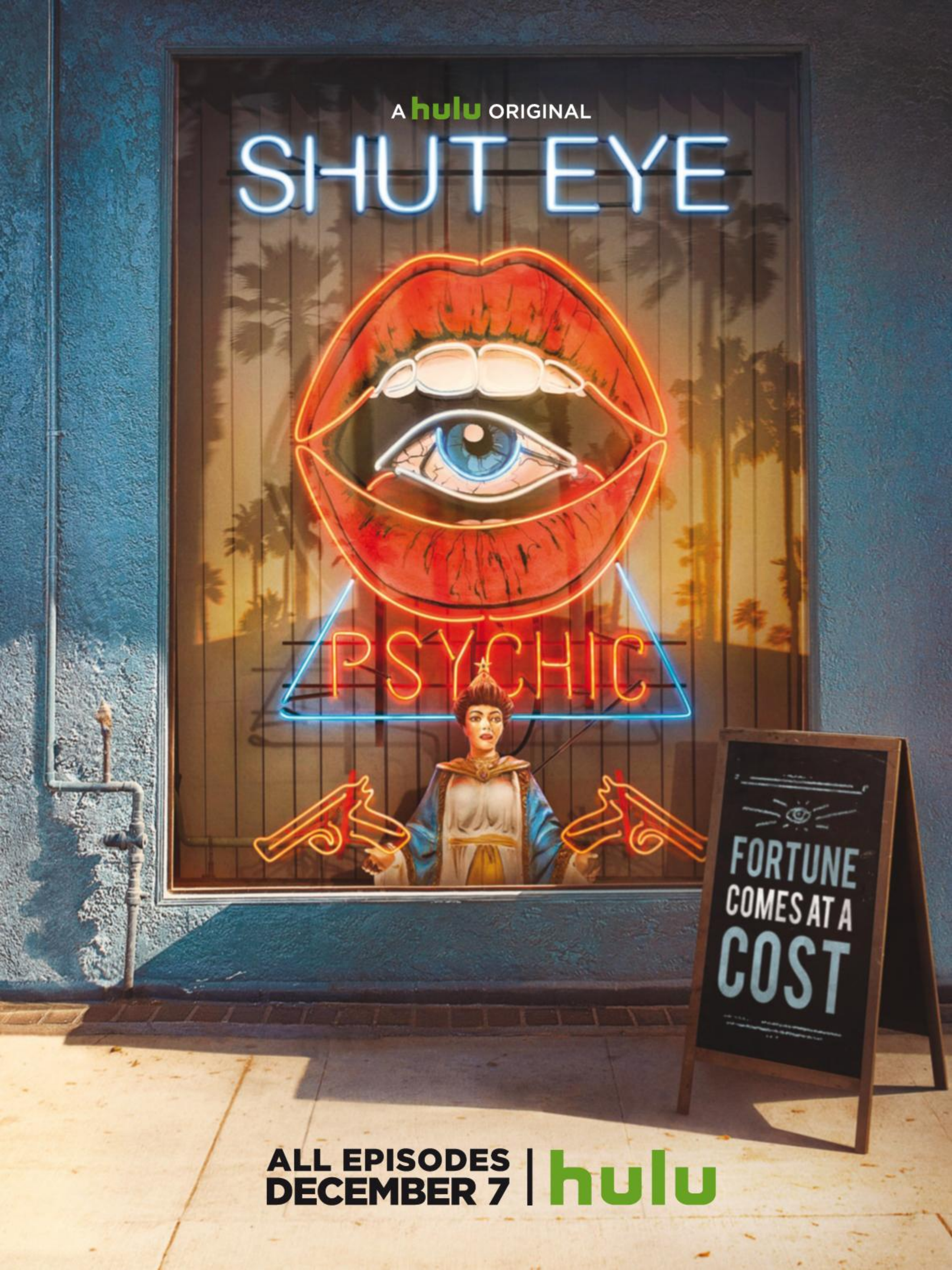
"Harry is done now," Rowling told Reuters this year, but it's tough to believe her. The writer's creative strides in 2016 yielded something bigger than any plotting of Harry: Her triumph came from an almost unmatched ownership and care of the wonder of her mesmerized constituents. Unlike other Hollywood mega-storytellers, Rowling has struck a balance of stretching her adult legs (she continues penning her gritty Cormoran Strike crime novels) while simultaneously dancing on the same whimsical feet on which she learned to walk. *Beasts* marks the 51-year-old's screenwriting debut; *Cursed Child*, her entrée into theatrical production. For a woman who's already soared the skies, Rowling has jubilantly found new heights to explore—whether on a broom or not. —*Marc Snetiker*

# KATE McKINNON

WHETHER BUSTING GHOSTS OR BUSTING CHOPS, ONE THING'S FOR CERTAIN WHEN IT COMES TO THE 32-YEAR-OLD ACTRESS: WE'RE WITH HER

**SHE STOLE THE SHOW IN** *Ghostbusters*. She broke our hearts as Hillary Clinton. And she's giving us a much-needed laugh in *Office Christmas Party*. She's Kate McKinnon, and since her 2012 debut on *SNL* she's been charming us with her absurd yet humanistic portrayals of passionate, headstrong women. Of course, 2016 will remember her best for imagining Clinton as a fiery, ambitious policy wonk who has a hard time keeping her ideals in check. "Playing Hillary has probably been the greatest honor of my life, and I was really looking forward to doing it for the next four years," McKinnon says with a sigh. "I felt so comfortable in those pantsuits, both physically and spiritually." The other pantsuit McKinnon donned this year, as Jillian Holtzmann in Paul Feig's *Ghostbusters*, also withstood its fair share of controversy, with McKinnon emerging as a bright spot in the highly scrutinized comedy. "[Jillian's] absolute willingness to be her true self, as bizarre and inappropriate as it often was, maybe ended up inspiring people," says McKinnon. The actress caps the year by playing an HR employee in *Office Christmas Party*—another oddball unique to the McKinnon oeuvre. "I think self-consciously I'm trying to put out there women with an overwhelmingly strong sense of self." *—Nicole Sperling*

ART PARTNER LICENSING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KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE

# BEYONCÉ'S 2016 TO-DO LIST EXPOSED!

WORLD EXCLUSIVE: EW HAS OBTAINED THE 35-YEAR-OLD
POP STAR'S SUPERSECRET PLAN TO RULE THE YEAR*

- Slay
- Upstage Chris Martin at Coldplay's Super Bowl halftime show
- Beat Bruno Mars in a dance-off at same halftime show
- Pretend to almost fall at Super Bowl—hah!—for viral Vine potential
- Drop the best album of the year
- Do Jay a solid: Give fans the only reason to subscribe to Tidal
- Debut my album on HBO—just one step closer to an EGOT!
- Cover "Purple Rain" in concert—my apologies to Prince for putting out *Lemonade* two days after his death
- Slay some more
- No interviews!!!!
- Casually dominate a whole other industry—athleisure—with my Ivy Park line
- Make Beckys with good hair everywhere fear for their lives
- Increase business at Red Lobsters nationwide
- Ditto hot sauce #swag
- Do Frank Ocean that favor I owe him, sing backup on *Blonde*
- Launch tour, gross more than $100 million in ticket sales
- See if I can get away with doing a 15-minute MTV VMAs performance—LOL!
- Smash a camera with a baseball bat on national TV
- Slay harder than before

*Lemonade* was nominated for four Emmys—but didn't win any.

Immediately following the release of "Formation," which has the lyric "I take his ass to Red Lobster," the restaurant chain saw a 33 percent rise in sales.

The Formation world tour was one of 2016's highest-grossing, with upward of $256 million in ticket sales.

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* THIS IS TOTALLY MADE UP BY THE *LEMONADE*-ADDICTED MINDS OF EW

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HEARTBREAKING A SERIES
AS TELEVISION HAS."

– THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

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# BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH

FROM SUPERSLEUTH TO SUPERHERO, THE 40-YEAR-OLD ACTOR LEFT US NOTHING SHORT OF MARVELED

**"INCREMENTAL" IS HOW** Benedict Cumberbatch describes his brilliant movie, TV, and stage career. "The success of *Sherlock* was overnight," he clarifies, "but that didn't immediately lead to everyone knocking down my door." Fair to say that door has since been vaporized. Cumberbatch played Marvel's newest superhero Doctor Strange, arrogant surgeon–turned–defender of the multiverse, and the film has grossed $636 million worldwide so far. For the actor, the response is a validation of last year's hard work: "Five months filming and, before that, crunching up to prep, on top of becoming a new dad and playing Hamlet [at London's Barbican Theatre] by night." Cumberbatch went Shakespearean again this year, playing Richard III in the BBC's *The Hollow Crown*. "There are huge parallels," he says of his disparate projects. "The scope of these dramas, the meta-narratives of the Marvel Universe and other cinematic universes of comic characters are epic." Next up? Three new eps of *Sherlock* and the return of Strange, possibly in next year's *Thor: Ragnarok* and definitely in 2018's *Avengers: Infinity War*. And Cumberbatch sounds the precise opposite of joking when he says he plans to do "the occasional radio work." So has he learned anything from his big 2016? "We're not momentary specks in an indifferent universe. We're momentary specks within a very caring, loving universe." Words of wisdom from our real-life Sorcerer Supreme. *—Darren Franich*

# The Chainsmokers

THE GRAMMY-NOMINATED DUO BEHIND THE SMASHES "CLOSER" AND "DON'T LET ME DOWN"(MORE THAN A BILLION COMBINED SPOTIFY STREAMS!) REVEAL HOW THEY BECAME KINGS OF THE CHARTS IN 2016

### THEY FOUND FRESH TALENT TO SING THEIR HOOKS

After Rihanna passed on singing "Don't Let Me Down," the Chainsmokers followed the success of "Roses," featuring the singer ROZES, and tapped another newcomer: rising pop star Daya. "We always look for someone who has a unique style," says Alex Pall (above right), who scouted the pair's other collaborators Phoebe Ryan, Halsey, and XYLØ. "If it's an established artist, people already have a perception of what that song will be."

### THEY WERE HEROES OF THE SUMMER FESTIVAL CIRCUIT

Two days before the Chainsmokers made their Coachella debut—during a coveted Sunday-evening time slot—Pall and Andrew Taggart (above left) were at a Baltimore bar, joking about how great it would be to surprise fans with a guest appearance from Third Eye Blind's Stephan Jenkins. (Yes, "Semi-Charmed Life" had just come on the jukebox.) So after a few 4 a.m. text-messaged pleas to the band's bassist, frontman Jenkins agreed to perform "Jumper" with the duo in Indio, Calif. Says Pall, "To have a drunk idea on a Friday night and then make it come to fruition on Sunday was epic."

### THEY RULED RADIO—BY NOT LISTENING TO IT

"We don't listen to what's popular right now and try to create that," says Taggart. That's why, after releasing 2014's viral novelty hit "#SELFIE," the Chainsmokers decided to ditch clichéd EDM styles. "We just got burnt-out," says Pall. "When we decided to f--- it and do what we wanted, we started having a lot of success." *—Jessica Goodman*

CUMBERBATCH: PARI DUKOVIC/TRUNK ARCHIVE; THE CHAINSMOKERS: TASO PAPADAKIS

# Sterling K. Brown

WITH A PAIR OF UNFORGETTABLE ROLES—AS PROSECUTOR CHRISTOPHER DARDEN ON FX'S *THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON* (FOR WHICH HE WON AN EMMY) AND AS FAMILY MAN RANDALL PEARSON ON NBC'S *THIS IS US*—THE 40-YEAR-OLD ACTOR BROKE BIG...TWICE

### *THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON: AMERICAN CRIME STORY*

"I was at the gym playing basketball, and talking trash is part of the game. This kid kept saying, 'Hey, young Darden! Why don't you come try to guard me?' So I switched up on this cat and shut him down. What he didn't realize was that I actually played Darden. He thought I just looked like the dude! Somebody else was like, 'You know, that's the dude that plays Darden!' And he was like, 'Can I get a picture?!'"

### *THIS IS US*

"I received the script for *This Is Us* while working on *O.J.* It was the best network pilot I've ever read. I was just so eager and excited at the possibility of moving from job to job. [Usually] one job ends and you start over from ground zero. So I'd be in that courtroom, and while everyone else would talk about being bored, I'd be poring over lines for *This Is Us* so that when the audition came I was ready."

### WINNING THE EMMY

"That was one of the more surreal experiences I've ever had. To walk up and see that most everyone in that room was standing up? The love they were sending in my direction was almost overwhelming. It's a great time to be on television. There are very powerful stories being told. To have the opportunity to be a part of that, it's a dream come true."
*—Amy Wilkinson*

PHOTOGRAPH BY **ART STREIBER**

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# THE KIDS OF *STRANGER THINGS*

THIS IRRESISTIBLE GROUP OF YOUNGSTERS FOUND THEMSELVES ON THE RECEIVING END OF SOME OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD CELEBRITY ADORATION

Gaten Matarazzo, Caleb McLaughlin, Finn Wolfhard, and Millie Bobby Brown visit *The Tonight Show* on Aug. 31

THEO WARGO/GETTY IMAGES FOR NBC

**AFTER DEBUTING IN JULY** on Netflix, *Stranger Things*, about an Indiana boy sucked into another dimension and the *Goonies*-like band of friends who try to save him, slowly became a bona fide summer sensation. Says Matt Duffer, who created the sci-fi hit with his twin brother, Ross, "[We felt] it on the internet; then it started happening where, like, I was out to dinner and at the table next to me, that's what they were talking about."

Consequently, the show catapulted its young, mostly unknown cast to rock-star levels of fame, attracting fans like Lea Michele, Daniel Radcliffe, and Amy Schumer. "Mindy Kaling tweeted, 'The kid who plays Mike in *Stranger Things* is my favorite actor,'" says Finn Wolfhard, 13, who plays the leader of the tween posse. "I was freaking out because I love her so much." Adds Caleb McLaughlin, 15, who plays Lucas, "When we went to Paris, we were coming out of a hotel and there were about five teenagers waiting for us. This girl literally picked up Gaten [Matarazzo] and was hugging him. She did the same thing to me. It was hilarious."

In September, Matarazzo, McLaughlin, and Millie Bobby Brown, 12, who plays telekinetic Eleven, were tapped to be Jimmy Kimmel's warm-up act for the Emmys. "They said they wanted us to sing," remembers Matarazzo, 14, who played Gavroche in *Les Misérables* on Broadway. "They gave us a choice of four songs: 'Happy,' 'Can't Stop the Feeling!,' 'Shake It Off,' and 'Uptown Funk!' It was a landslide—'Uptown Funk!'" Adds Brown, "I died when I saw David Schwimmer. I was on stage and I was like, 'Oh, my goodness, it's Ross Geller!'" The trio even passed out peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to the hungry crowd midway through the ceremony. But when *Stranger Things*' second season premieres in 2017, it's possible there may be one celeb who doesn't watch. Says McLaughlin of the sandwich incident, "I ran out, and some people were like, 'Aw man, you don't have any more?' I was like, 'I'm so sorry, Chris Rock!'"

*—Tim Stack, with additional reporting by Ariana Bacle and Lynette Rice*

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]

# Sarah Paulson

NO *AMERICAN STORY*, WHETHER *CRIME* OR *HORROR*, WAS COMPLETE THIS YEAR WITHOUT THE 42-YEAR-OLD ACTRESS, WHO TOOK HOME HER FIRST EMMY FOR PORTRAYING PROSECUTOR MARCIA CLARK ON *THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON*

**Has this been the best year of your career?**

It certainly has been the best in terms of the varied things I've gotten to do. I think I've done six different parts just for Ryan Murphy. That's not to mention I just started [Murphy's next miniseries] *Feud* and *Ocean's 8*.

**Is there one moment that stands out?**

Well, Rihanna [Paulson's *Ocean's 8* costar] did say to me how much she loved the O.J. thing and my performance in it. It was one of those moments where I thought, "This is f---ing bats---!" When Rihanna has seen your work and says something nice to you, I feel like that means you had a really good year.

**I happen to know that you took one of the Marcia wigs from *The People v. O.J. Simpson*. Where do you keep it?**

I sleep with it at night. I'm kidding. [*Laughs*] No, it's still in a ziplock bag. I stayed in a hotel the night of the Emmys and I brought the wig to the hotel. It became like a talisman to me.

**Does sharing this year with your girlfriend, Holland Taylor, make it feel particularly special?**

I am in a very blessed, luscious place right now. It isn't lost on me that I think maybe I did my best work being with this person. And my ability to do that was helped by the fact that I have an incredible thing going on in my life. Let's go with that.

*—Tim Stack*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT TRACHTENBERG

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# VIOLA DAVIS

ON SCREENS BIG AND SMALL, THE COMMANDING ACTRESS CONTINUED TO PROVE HER METTLE—AND MAKE A CASE FOR FINALLY LANDING AN OSCAR

**VIOLA DAVIS GAVE VOICE TO** the powerless with Academy Award–nominated roles in *Doubt* (2008) and *The Help* (2011), but it was Shonda Rhimes who recognized her true power, tapping her to play morally murky Annalise Keating on ABC's *How to Get Away With Murder*. That role may have also led to Davis' casting as the ultimate baddie in 2016's *Suicide Squad*. With the flick of a knife and a slow chew on a rare cut of beef, she proved that her Amanda Waller was more terrifying than a gaggle of supervillains. “It was a window into her character, or lack thereof,” Davis says.

*Suicide Squad* earned Davis, 51, her geek bona fides, but her role as the stifled housewife Rose in Denzel Washington's adaptation of the play *Fences* may finally land her the Oscar. Though she'd played Rose on Broadway in 2010, she still found new aspects of the character. “I wanted to show her age. It's 1957. They are African-Americans. It's a different sort of life,” she says.

Whatever the part, one thing's certain—no one can cry like Davis. “People are always talking about my nose running,” she says with a laugh. “But there are moments where vanity gets tossed out the window. I think about when my dad passed, or when I was 7 and my dog was hit by a car. I freeze those moments and understand their value in everything I do.” —*Nicole Sperling*

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# THE 2016 POP CULTURE CHALLENGE

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE ENTERTAINMENT YEAR THAT WAS? TEST YOUR SMARTS AND FIND OUT WHETHER YOU BELONG IN THE HEAVENLY GOOD PLACE...OR IN THE HELLISH UPSIDE DOWN. **BY AMY WILKINSON**

→ Eddie Redmayne

JAAP BUITENDIJK

## № 1

**Which of the following is NOT a Fantastic Beast?**

A — *Rhinowonk*
B — *Niffler*
C — *Erumpent*
D — *Demiguise*

## —2—

**Which classic TV movie was remade by James Franco into a vampire drama?**

A — A Friend to Die For
B — Fifteen and Pregnant
C — Mother, May I Sleep With Danger?
D — Co-ed Call Girl

## —3—

**Place these five superhero flicks in order of domestic box office returns* from most to least:**

A
Deadpool
✎ ..........

B
Suicide Squad
✎ ..........

C
Captain America: Civil War
✎ ..........

D
Doctor Strange
✎ ..........

E
Batman v Superman
✎ ..........

## —4—

**Which Jonas brother fronts the band DNCE?**

✎ ..........

## —5—

**Match the actor to their feature-film directorial debut this year:**

1 — *Ewan McGregor*
2 — *Natalie Portman*
3 — *Katie Holmes*
4 — *Meg Ryan*

A — A Tale of Love and Darkness
B — American Pastoral
C — Ithaca
D — All We Had

## —6—

**True or False: Taraji P. Henson wrote a memoir titled *Cookie Doesn't Crumble*.**

T / F

## —7—

**Woody Allen made a TV show this year! Do you remember what it was called?**

✎ ..........

..........

..........

## *No* 8

**Under which nom de plume was Taylor Swift revealed to have co-written ex-boyfriend Calvin Harris' hit "This Is What You Came For"?**

A — *Elsa Karlsson*
B — *Holly Hemnes*
C — *Erik Lindberg*
D — *Nils Sjöberg*

## —9—

**Threequels didn't do well at the box office in 2016. Pick the one that did the worst domestically:**

A
Inferno

B
Blair Witch

C
Bridget Jones's Baby

FRANCO: TOMMASO BODDI/GETTY IMAGES FOR HULU; *DEADPOOL*: JOE LEDERER; *SUICIDE SQUAD*: CLAY ENOS; *DOCTOR STRANGE*: JAY MAIDMENT; *BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE*: CLAY ENOS/© 2014 WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT INC., RATPAC-DUNE ENTERTAINMENT LLC AND RATPAC ENTERTAINMENT, LLC (2); DNCE: STEVEN TAYLOR; COOKIE: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO; ALLEN: SAMIR HUSSEIN/WIREIMAGE; SWIFT AND HARRIS: LARRY BUSACCA/BMA2015/GETTY IMAGES FOR DCP; *INFERNO*: JONATHAN PRIME; *BLAIR WITCH*: LIONSGATE; *BRIDGET JONES'S BABY*: GILES KEYTE

---

*SOURCE: BOX OFFICE MOJO

### — 10 —

**Finish this lyric from the Chainsmokers' "Closer": "Stay and play that blink-182 song/That we beat to death in..."**

.............................................................

### — 11 —

**Which literary film series had its final installment downgraded from a feature film to a TV movie?**

A — Divergent
B — The Dark Tower
C — The 5th Wave
D — Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children

### — 12 —

**True or False: In *The Shallows*, Blake Lively befriends a seagull and names him Steven Seagull.**

T / F

### — 13 —

**This is actor Mahershala Ali. Choose from below three projects he appeared in this year:**

A — Moonlight
B — Marvel's Luke Cage
C — Westworld
D — Rogue One: A Star Wars Story
E — Free State of Jones

### No 14

**We bid farewell to *Downton Abbey*: Which character got the last line?**

A
•
*Lady Mary*

B
•
*Carson*

C
•
*The Dowager Countess*

D
•
*Lady Edith*

### — 15 —

**Check the names of the two *Grease* film stars who appeared in Fox's *Grease: Live*:**

☐ *Olivia Newton-John (Sandy)*
☐ *John Travolta (Danny)*
☐ *Stockard Channing (Rizzo)*
☐ *Didi Conn (Frenchy)*
☐ *Lorenzo Lamas (Tom Chisum)*
☐ *Barry Pearl (Doody)*
☐ *Eddie Deezen (Eugene)*

### No 16

**What was the name of Britney Spears' 2016 album?**

A — Moonlight
B — Glory
C — Britney Jean
D — Rise

*THE SHALLOWS*: VINCE VALITUTTI; ALI: TIBRINA HOBSON/GETTY IMAGES; LADY MARY, LADY EDITH: NICK BRIGGS/CARNIVAL FILM & TELEVISION LIMITED 2015 FOR *MASTERPIECE* (2); MR. CARSON: JOSS BARRATT/CARNIVAL FILMS; THE DOWAGER COUNTESS: NICK BRIGGS/PBS; *GREASE*: PARAMOUNT; SPEARS: KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES

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## —17—

**True or False: On Netflix's *Full House* revival, *Fuller House*, middle daughter Stephanie (Jodie Sweetin) has grown up to be an international DJ whose stage name is…D.J. Tanner.**

T / F

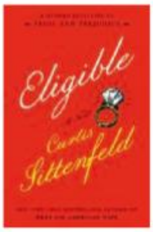
## № 18

**The cast of NBC's** ✎ ........ **stoked reboot rumors when they reunited to film a get-out-the-vote video.**

## —19—

**Which TV showrunner beseeched women to "Topple the patriarchy!" during her Emmy acceptance speech?**

A — *Jill Soloway*
B — *Shonda Rhimes*
C — *Lena Dunham*
D — *Michelle King*



## —20—

**Curtis Sittenfeld's novel *Eligible* is a modern-day, Cincinnati-set retelling of which classic?**

A ● Great Expectations

B ● Jane Eyre

C ● Pride and Prejudice

D ● Mrs. Dalloway

## —21—

**Match the celeb to their music-video cameo:**

1 ● *Serena Williams* ✎ ........

2 ● *Vince Vaughn* ✎ ........

3 ● *Tyra Banks* ✎ ........

4 ● *James Corden* ✎ ........

5 ● *Chrissy Teigen* ✎ ........

A — *Fergie's "M.I.L.F.$"*
B — *Maroon 5's "Don't Wanna Know"*
C — *Drake's "Childs Play"*
D — *Beyoncé's "Sorry"*
E — *Justin Timberlake's "Can't Stop the Feeling!"*

## № 22

**Spoiler alert! What are the final four words on *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*?**

✎ ........

........

........

........

**ANSWER KEY >** 1. A; 2. C; 3. A–2, B–4, C–1, D–5, E–3; 4. Joe; 5. 1–B, 2–A, 3–D, 4–C; 6. False. Henson's book is titled *Around the Way Girl*; 7. *Crisis in Six Scenes*; 8. D; 9. B; 10. Tucson; 11. A; 12. True; 13. A, B, and E; 14. C (Isobel Crawley: "What else could we drink to? We're going forward to the future, not back into the past." The Dowager Countess: "If only we had the choice."); 15. Conn and Pearl; 16. B; 17. True; 18. *Will & Grace*; 19. A; 20. C; 21. 1–D, 2–B, 3–C, 4–E, 5–A; 22. Rory: "Mom?" Lorelai: "Yeah?" Rory: "I'm pregnant."

## HOW DID YOU DO?

### 22–17

**IN FORMATION!**

You drank the pop culture lemonade (and read your EW!) all year long. When it comes to knowledge of movies, TV, books, and music, you didn't need a single lesson from your daddy!

### 16–8

**SWEET/BITTER**

There's no denying you find pop culture simply delicious, but your 2016 diet wasn't as diverse as it could have been. Add a new streaming service or book club to the menu for a more well-balanced 2017.

### 7–0

**THIS IS BUST**

Tough-love time: You didn't do great. But here's the twist: It's never too late to up your entertainment IQ. Get binging and you could earn a sterling score next year!

*FULLER HOUSE*: MICHAEL YARISH/NETFLIX; WILLIAMS: ALBERTO E. RODRIGUEZ/WIREIMAGE; VAUGHN: JOHN SHEARER/WIREIMAGE; BANKS: CINDY ORD/GETTY IMAGES FOR COSMOPOLITAN; CORDEN: STEFANIE KEENAN/GETTY IMAGES FOR AIRBNB; TEIGEN: JB LACROIX/WIREIMAGE; *GILMORE GIRLS: A YEAR IN THE LIFE*: SAEED ADYANI/NETFLIX

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Over two action-packed days, EW celebrated the best in entertainment with non-stop programming from today's top talent including the cast of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and live performances by the casts of *Happy Endings* & *Crazy-Ex Girlfriend*.

Superfans enjoyed panels by the stars of *Supernatural*, *This Is Us* & late night host James Corden. The fun continued with live evening performances by Nick Jonas & Janelle Monàe.

Festival-goers snapped photos in the TNT *Good Behavior* & Starz *Ash vs. Evil Dead* photo booths and were pampered at the FOX *Star* manicure and braid bar. Reality TV fans picked their team in the NBC *The Voice* chair, battled on the Spike *Lip Sync Battle* stage and competed in the CBS *Survivor* Challenge Course along with Jeff Probst.

EW thanks all the fans and sponsors who made PopFest a huge success, including M&M'S, Heineken, KIND, FYE, CBS, TNT, FOX, NBC, Starz, Spike, Audi, SoulCycle, popchips, Designer8* & Lyft. Check out the new People/Entertainment Weekly Network for more (www.people.com/PEN).

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# MOVIES

## *THE* YEAR'S BEST FILMS

BY — *Chris Nashawaty* (@ChrisNashawaty)
*Leah Greenblatt* (@Leahbats)

### LA LA LAND

*DIRECTED BY*
DAMIEN CHAZELLE

No 1

**IN A YEAR DOMINATED BY DIVISION, DISTRUST, AND DISAPPOINTMENT,** it might seem strange to anoint a swooning musical as the top film of 2016. But as the escapist Busby Berkeley fantasias of the Great Depression proved, sometimes the best medicine can only be found in a darkened movie theater. Damien Chazelle's thrillingly ambitious, unapologetically romantic *La La Land* is a movie that's out of time and arrives at just the right time. It's a balm for our weary national soul. Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone, reteaming from 2011's *Crazy, Stupid, Love* (with sparks intact), play struggling young artists in modern-day Los Angeles whose dreams seem out of reach. At least until they find each other in, of all places, a traffic jam on the 105 that erupts into a showstopping frenzy of singing and dancing. The next 120 minutes are just as intoxicating—an irresistible cocktail of heart-swelling joy and heartrending sadness as we follow the ups and downs of their relationship. Nostalgic without seeming old-fashioned, *La La Land* is pure movie magic. It's a testament to the timeless, transporting power of cinema. —*Chris Nashawaty*

*DIORAMA BY*
**MAR CERDÀ**

↑ Alex R. Hibbert and Mahershala Ali

## MOONLIGHT

*DIRECTED BY* BARRY JENKINS

No

2

**NOTHING PORTENDED *MOONLIGHT* AS** a masterpiece. Shot on a shoestring over a scant 25 days by an unknown director and largely devoid of big-name stars, Barry Jenkins' hushed, artful indie didn't so much arrive as drift gently into moviegoers' consciousness. But by the time the credits rolled, the effect was both radical and sublime, a rare cinematic grace note in a noisy, bitterly fractious year. We first meet Chiron (played at various stages by Alex R. Hibbert, Ashton Sanders, and Trevante Rhodes) as a wary latchkey kid in Miami drawn out of his shell by a local drug dealer (Mahershala Ali), then watch as he grows slowly, fitfully into his own skin. The movie could easily be dismissed as a panopticon of hot-button intersectional issues—addiction, poverty, single parenthood, black male sexuality. Instead, it's something much richer: an achingly personal portrait of lives lived on the margins, and a filmmaking triumph of transcendent, heartbreaking beauty. *—Leah Greenblatt*

DAVID BORNFRIEND/A24

## No. 3

## MANCHESTER BY THE SEA

*DIRECTED BY*
KENNETH LONERGAN

**A STORY SO BEAUTIFULLY LIVED-IN** that it feels like a shock to emerge from the theater into the "real" world, Kenneth Lonergan's deceptively low-key drama unfurls in a way movies are rarely allowed to anymore—slowly, patiently, and with infinite care. The obsessively perfectionist filmmaker, who turns out projects about as often as pandas reproduce in captivity (and with nearly as much mystery), aims for the defiantly ordinary in both setting—the shabby Northeast town of the title—and story: An ornery Boston janitor (Casey Affleck) loses his older brother (Kyle Chandler) and is forced to return to his hometown to care for his teen nephew (Lucas Hedges). Those are the bones of it, at least, but Lonergan fills every frame with the clarity and compassion of his vision. (Whatever you've heard about a to-be-revealed tragedy is true; what gets mentioned less is that the movie is also funny as hell.) The exquisitely crafted, emotionally ragged *Manchester* doesn't just ask for time and effort; it earns it. *—LG*

Casey Affleck and Lucas Hedges

### THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**BEST BICEPS**
Chris Evans in *Captain America: Civil War*. "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet guns of liberty…"

**WORST PROP**
Turkey baster in *Don't Breathe*. Can't. Be. Unseen.

**BEST TEMPER TANTRUM**
Lewis MacDougall in *A Monster Calls*. Both bark and bite.

Rachel Weisz and Colin Farrell

## No. 4

## THE LOBSTER

*DIRECTED BY*
YORGOS LANTHIMOS

**THERE ARE SOME MOVIES THAT ARE SO SINGULAR** and strange that they defy explanation—and then there's *The Lobster*. The most original and gorgeously demented romantic satire since *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos' English-language debut stars Colin Farrell as David, a hangdog thirtysomething whose wife has left him for another man. So far, so safe, right? But in Lanthimos' cracked alternate universe, that means David now has 45 days to find a new partner or else he'll be turned into an animal of his choosing and be released into the wild. He chooses a lobster. David checks into a spa-like retreat to court potential mates and finds the whole Kafkaesque charade too much. So he joins a chaste group of rebel loners, which includes Rachel Weisz's "Short Sighted Woman," who he believes is his soul mate—although it's now too late for happy endings. Or is it? Lanthimos creates an existential rabbit hole that some may find too weird to go down. At a time when sequels and familiar formulas rule at the box office, *The Lobster* is like a deep breath of sea air. *—CN*

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA: AMAZON STUDIOS AND ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS; EVANS: © 2016 MARVEL. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED; BASTER: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO; A MONSTER CALLS: QUIM VIVES/FOCUS FEATURES; THE LOBSTER: DESPINA SPYROU/24

BREAKOUT

# Gal Gadot

In *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*

Wonder Woman has been thrown to the ground, her sword is just out of reach, and Doomsday is fast approaching. Superman is hurt. Batman is gone. Then, a glimmer of defiance appears in the eye of the Amazon warrior, confirming that she may be down, but she's not out. That moment—not to mention every other scene Gal Gadot stole in *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*—only ratcheted up the anticipation surrounding the heroine's first solo movie, *Wonder Woman*, due June 2, 2017. "When [director] Zack [Snyder] first cast me for *BvS*, I came aboard something that was pretty much ready," Gadot told EW in March. "Now we are telling an entire story about her. And we don't want to just show a generic story of a superhero coming of age. We want her to be full and whole." And super. Director Patty Jenkins (*Monster*) is putting Gadot, 31, through paces serious enough to give Diana Prince herself pause. Her most difficult moment? "It was the fourth day of shooting," Gadot says. "I was going from zero to a thousand on the emotional level, and then I had to jump on a horse and ride into the sunset. I'm in my costume. Everyone else is in big coats. I have tears streaming down my face and I can't see anything because it's so cold. It was a handful." *—Nicole Sperling*

GADOT: DAVID ROEMER/TRUNK ARCHIVE; *HELL OR HIGH WATER*: LOREY SEBASTIAN/CBS FILMS

## №5

## HELL OR HIGH WATER

*DIRECTED BY* DAVID MACKENZIE

**YOU MIGHT HAVE TO GO ALL THE WAY** back to 1967's *Bonnie and Clyde* to find a film about outlaws on the run that feels as timely as David Mackenzie's *Hell or High Water*. A folk-hero ballad for the age of predatory lending, the film stars Chris Pine and Ben Foster as West Texas brothers who set off on a string of bank heists to save their late mother's ranch (which happens to sit on millions in untapped crude). The Howard siblings are desperate men, but they still have their pride. They're a pair of hard-luck losers in a game that's been rigged against them since birth. Hot on their trail is Jeff Bridges' leathery Texas Ranger. And the miracle of Bridges' performance is how he slowly draws complexity out of a familiar cliché. His crusty wisecracks aimed toward his put-upon partner (Gil Birmingham) mask an end-of-the-road vulnerability he's too macho to reveal. You could call *Hell or High Water* a modern-day Western, I suppose. But it's the best kind of Western: the kind where the heroes and the villains are impossible to tell apart. *—CN*

Chris Pine and Ben Foster

Ha Jung-woo and Kim Min-hee

## № 6

## THE HANDMAIDEN

*DIRECTED BY* PARK CHAN-WOOK

**DEAR MOVIE FREAK: KOREAN AUTEUR** Park Chan-wook sees your crazy, and he raises you. The man behind mind-bending exports like *Thirst* and *Oldboy* dips into delicious madness once again with *The Handmaiden*—a historical romance that is to Merchant Ivory what Molotov cocktails are to tea cozies. Loosely adapted from British novelist Sarah Waters' 2002 Victorian-era novel, *Fingersmith*, and recast in 1930s colonial Korea, the film follows a young grifter named Sookee (Kim Tae-ri) assigned to serve Lady Hideko (Kim Min-hee), a lonely Japanese aristocrat held captive by a cruel uncle at his remote country estate. Sookee's duty is to set the stage for a seduction by Count Fujiwara (Ha Jung-woo, who is neither a count nor a Fujiwara). The first surprise is that she falls hopelessly in love with her mark; the rest come tumbling after in the most twisty, audacious, and wildly sexy 145 minutes of cinema this year. —*LG*

## A GOOD YEAR FOR BAD WOMEN

WHEN IT COMES TO MAJOR *GRRR* POWER, THESE FEISTY FEMMES TOOK THE CAKE—AND THEY STOMPED ON IT, TOO. —**DEVAN COGGAN**

**RACHEL WATSON**

*EMILY BLUNT*

**MOVIE**
*The Girl on the Train*

**BAD BECAUSE**
She's the ultimate unreliable narrator, an unemployed, liquor-drenched wretch whose obsession with her ex-husband's perfect new life lands her smack in the middle of a murder investigation.

**BEST BAD LINE**
"I'm afraid of myself."

**AMY MITCHELL**

*MILA KUNIS*

**MOVIE**
*Bad Moms*

**BAD BECAUSE**
She's a fed-up matriarch who trades PTA bake sales for Jell-O shots and degeneracy.

**BEST BAD LINE**
"I'm drowning at work, and my boss is a f---ing moron, and three hours ago, I may or may not have committed a felony hit-and-run."

**HARLEY QUINN**

*MARGOT ROBBIE*

**MOVIE**
*Suicide Squad*

**BAD BECAUSE**
She's hell in hot pants, a literal comic-book villainess who revels in mayhem and can swing a baseball bat with the best of 'em.

**BEST BAD LINE**
"I'm known to be quite vexing. I'm just forewarning you."

**JILLIAN HOLTZMANN**

*KATE McKINNON*

**MOVIE**
*Ghostbusters*

**BAD BECAUSE**
She's a top-notch engineer, explosion enthusiast, and slightly psychotic mad scientist who knows how to wield a proton pack.

**BEST BAD LINE**
"I can think of seven good uses of a cadaver today."

**SHELBY**

*CHLOË GRACE MORETZ*

**MOVIE**
*Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising*

**BAD BECAUSE**
She's a weed-fueled freshman ready to prove that girls can go just as hard as dudes.

**BEST BAD LINE**
"We're starting our own sorority, outside the system, that can totally do whatever it wants. Like throw dope-ass parties and totally rage."

**SUNNY SOKE**

*KATHY BATES*

**MOVIE**
*Bad Santa 2*

**BAD BECAUSE**
She's a foulmouthed, chain-smoking thief with a Mrs. Claus wig and zero maternal instinct.

**BEST BAD LINE**
"I didn't even know I'd given birth until I tripped over him."

*THE HANDMAIDEN*: CJ FILMS; BLUNT: UNIVERSAL; KUNIS: MICHELE K. SHORT; ROBBIE: CLAY ENOS/WARNER BROS.; MCKINNON: HOPPER STONE/SONY; MORETZ: CHUCK ZLOTNICK/UNIVERSAL; BATES: JAN THIJS/BROAD GREEN PICTURES

Jaeden Lieberher

## Nº 7

## MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

*DIRECTED BY*
JEFF NICHOLS

**THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE IN JEFF NICHOLS'** supernatural thriller, an eerie sci-fi tone poem that quietly upends the whiz-bang conventions of the genre. An anxious father (Michael Shannon) has managed to extract his 8-year-old son, Alton (Jaeden Lieberher), from a Texas doomsday cult (led by Sam Shepard, as a gentleman-preacher type with shades of Branch Davidian madness). But the cult wants him back, and now so does the government. What's so important about one little boy? The first clue is what happens when Alton removes the swimming goggles his dad takes care to keep in place: His eyes shoot incandescent beams of blue light. And weaponized vision is the least of his paranormal gifts—almost none of which his protectors (who grow to include Joel Edgerton, Kirsten Dunst, and Adam Driver) understand. Nichols, whose interracial drama *Loving* is already an early awards-season darling, plucks his mood from atmospheric forerunners like *Starman* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*: a stark Americana of deserted highways and dingy motel rooms haunted by the low, ominous thrum of impending Armageddon. By making the implied explicit, the ending loses some of the movie's carefully cultivated mystery, but the feeling lingers. *—LG*

### THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**BEST USE OF BELLS**
*The Handmaiden.* Gives "jingle bells" a whole new meaning.

**BEST PERFORMANCE BY A GOAT**
Black Phillip in *The Witch*. Beware his bleating heart.

**WORST SAFE WORD**
"Martha" in *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*. Was "Oedipal Rage" a discarded subtitle?

Anthony Weiner

## Nº 8

## WEINER

*DIRECTED BY* JOSH KRIEGMAN AND ELYSE STEINBERG

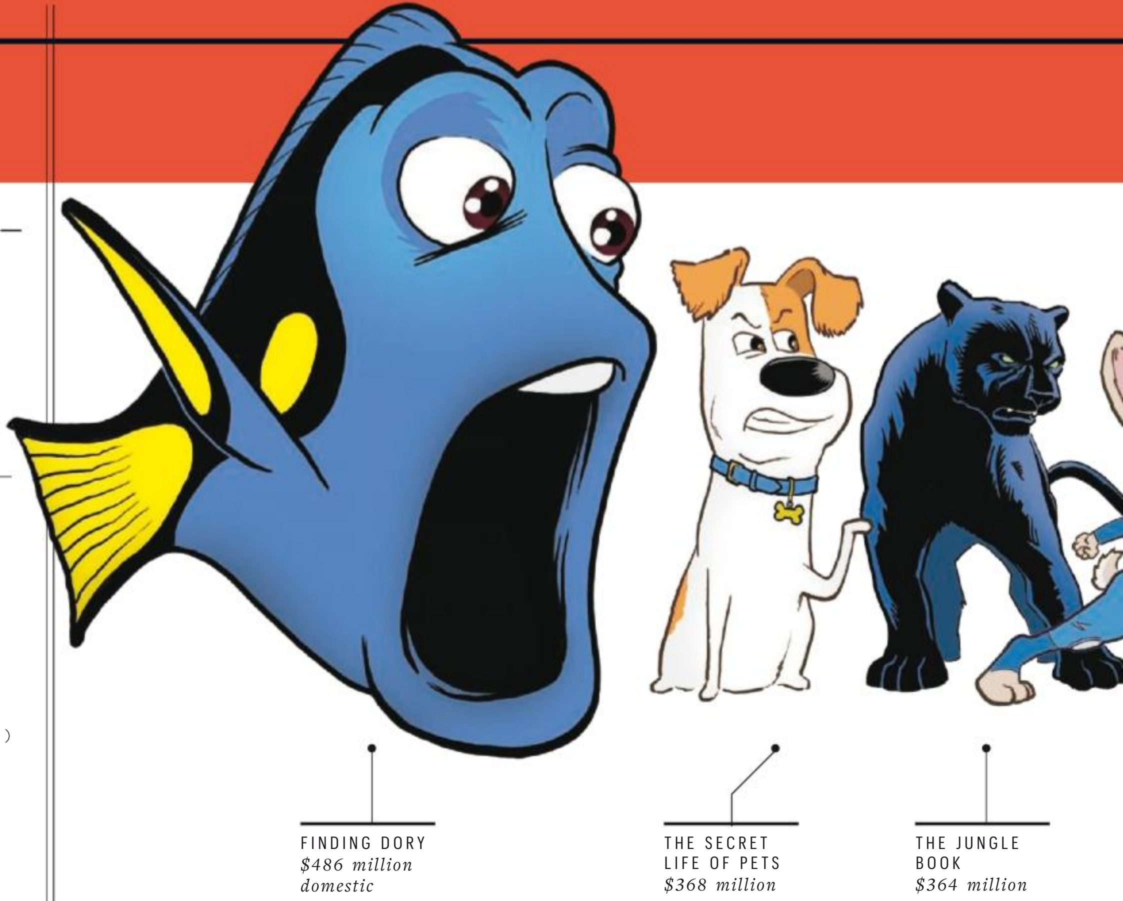
**POLITICAL SCANDALS COME IN ALL** shapes and sizes, but no one has been on such familiar terms with all of their ignominious varieties as the disgraced congressman Anthony Weiner (a.k.a. Carlos Danger, he of the d--- pic Twitter brouhaha of 2011...and 2013...and 2016). Shadowed by a documentary film crew during his quixotic 2013 bid to restore his reputation and become the next mayor of New York City, Weiner manages to step on virtually every land mine in his path (and a few that aren't) as his long-suffering wife, Huma Abedin, looks on in stunned disbelief. It doesn't take long to know exactly how she feels. *Weiner* is like a slow-motion car crash you can't look away from. By the end of Josh Kriegman and Elyse Steinberg's extraordinary all-access chronicle, you might walk away with a better understanding of how the campaign sausage gets made, but you'll still have no clue how one very smart, very ambitious man could be so reckless and stupid. *—CN*

MIDNIGHT SPECIAL: BEN ROTHSTEIN/WARNER BROS.; BELLS: WILSHIREIMAGES/GETTY IMAGES; *BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE*: CLAY ENOS/WARNER BROS.; *WEINER*: IFC FILMS

# THE HOLLYWOOD FOOD CHAIN

ANIMALS WERE **HUGE** AT THE BOX OFFICE THIS YEAR, BUT THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE TOP DOG—ERM, FISH.

( *ILLUSTRATIONS BY* )
**OWEN BROZMAN**



SOURCE: BOX OFFICE MOJO

↓ Karl Rice, Ben Carolan, Percy Chamburuka, Ferdia Walsh-Peelo, Lucy Boynton, Mark McKenna, Conor Hamilton, and Ian Kenny

## *No* 9

## SING STREET

*DIRECTED BY* JOHN CARNEY

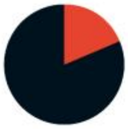
**BOY MEETS GIRL, GUITAR, AND WORLD,** roughly in that order, in the winning third outing from Irish musician-turned-filmmaker John Carney (*Once*, *Begin Again*). As his boisterous, bittersweet coming-of-age dramedy opens, hapless young hero Conor (Ferdia Walsh-Peelo) is trapped between two divorcing parents in depressed 1980s Dublin, and stung by the more casual daily cruelties of life as a teenage outcast at an all-boys school only slightly cozier than a prison camp.

But hope arrives in the form of an acid-washed angel named Raphina (Lucy Boynton), an aspiring model far too gorgeous and sophisticated for the local delinquents—though she might be persuaded to open her heart to a bona fide rock star. And so begins Conor's quest to transform himself into one of the new-wave gods he sees on *Top of the Pops*, no matter how many hours of mind-numbing band practice or humiliating hair experiments it takes.

Though there's nothing particularly new or trenchant in Carney's storytelling, it would be a shame to dismiss this scrappy charmer as insignificant; its heart is too tender, and its aim is true. *—LG*

### THE YEAR DISNEY DOMINATED

Hits included *Finding Dory*, *Captain America: Civil War*, *Moana*, and *Doctor Strange*



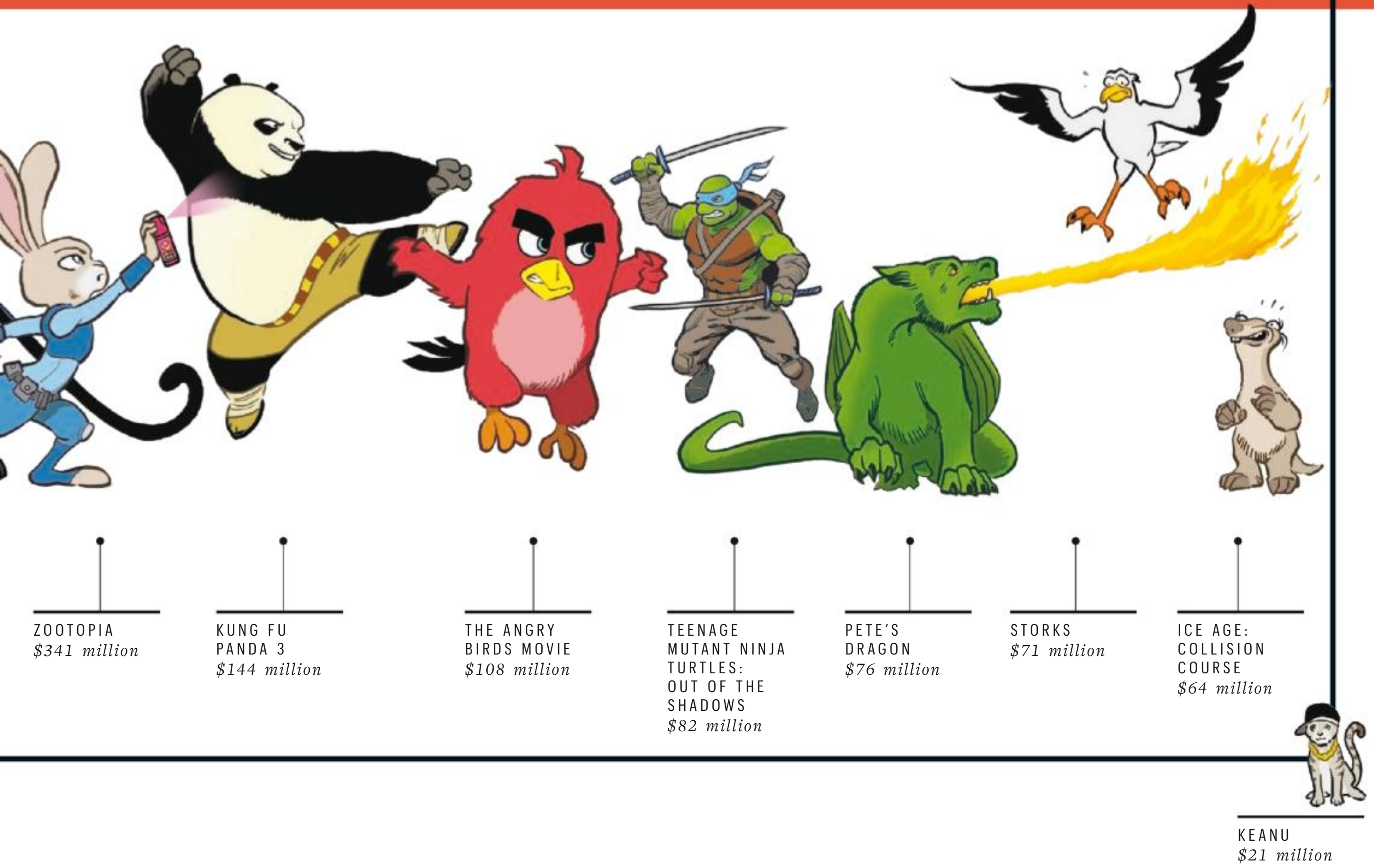
○ **TOTAL DOMESTIC BOX OFFICE AS OF DEC. 2**
$10,177,300,000

● **DISNEY'S DOMESTIC BOX OFFICE AS OF DEC. 2**
$2,444,000,000

SOURCE: BOX OFFICE MOJO

SING STREET: WEINSTEIN CO.; CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR: ZADE ROSENTHAL/© 2016 MARVEL. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

**THE REST OF THE BEST MOVIES OF THE YEAR** **11** *Fireworks Wednesday* **12** *Moana* **13** *20th Century Women* **14** *Jackie* **15** *American Honey* **16** *Elle* **17** *Toni Erdmann* **18** *The Invitation*



↓ Chris Evans

## CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR

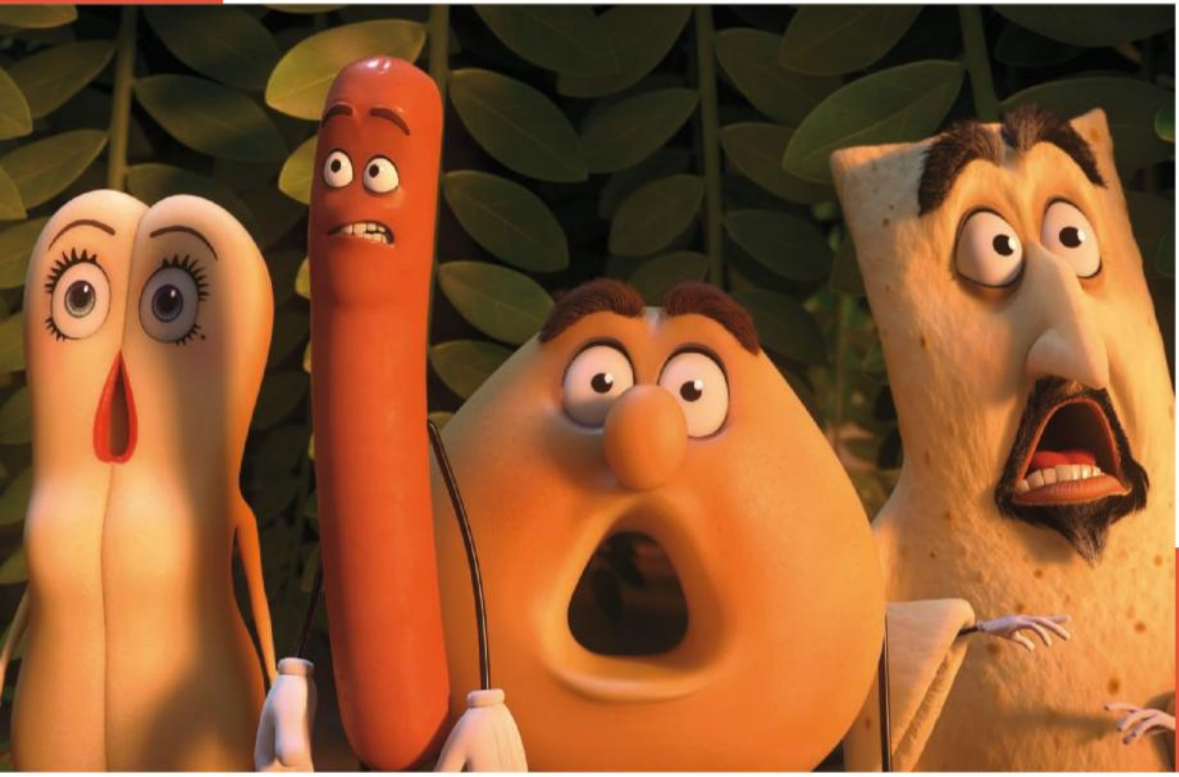
*DIRECTED BY*
ANTHONY AND JOE RUSSO

## № 10

**THE BEST AVENGERS MOVIE THAT DOESN'T HAVE THE WORD *AVENGERS* IN ITS** title (it's better than those, too), *Captain America: Civil War* is the superhero extravaganza that Marvel has been building up to for the past decade. After all, this was the moment our gang of omnipotent misfits' all-for-one-and-one-for-all foundation finally cracked. And it wasn't pretty. It was like a family reunion gone violent. Or, to make the metaphor more timely, the U.S. electorate circa 2016. A rift comes between Chris Evans' Steve Rogers (a.k.a. Captain America) and Robert Downey Jr.'s Tony Stark (Iron Man) after the world's governments try to rein in the crime fighters and put them under U.N. oversight. New alliances are formed, brutal smackdowns are dispensed, and a few new faces are sprinkled into the mix. (It's actually one of the few Marvel flicks where brand extension feels organic rather than craven.) If all superhero movies were as good as *Civil War*, no one would complain about the number of them. Even nonbelievers might see the light. —*CN*

# 10 UNFORGETTABLE SCENES

Sausage Party



## THE FOOD ORGY

*SAUSAGE PARTY*

№ 1

## 2 — BLACK PHILLIP SPEAKS

*THE WITCH*

After a family of Puritan settlers suffers two deaths, suspicion falls on the shoulders of teenage daughter Thomasin (Anya Taylor-Joy), who her mother believes to be an agent of evil. Thomasin, in turn, blames the family's goat, Black Phillip, claiming he is Lucifer himself. A crazy notion? Absolutely. Until, in the film's climactic, chilling moment, Thomasin is proved correct as Phillip not only starts to talk but makes her an offer she can't—and doesn't—refuse: "Wouldst thou like to live deliciously?" —*Clark Collis*

## 3 — "WOULD THAT IT WERE SO SIMPLE"

*HAIL, CAESAR!*

Before he was officially set to play young Han Solo, Alden Ehrenreich charmed as Hobie Doyle, a singing cowboy in over his head when he's cast in a melodrama in the Coen brothers' Old Hollywood send-up. In one extended sequence, the director Laurence Laurentz (Ralph Fiennes) asks Hobie to enter, take a seat on the divan, and say his line. Let's just say it's not so simple, and while Hobie may never be a superstar, Ehrenreich is a different story. —*Kevin P. Sullivan*

SONY PICTURES

**IT'S NOT EASY TO SINGLE OUT THE GNARLIEST** scene in a movie that takes nearly every sacred cow it can find and turns it into the trash-talking hamburger in aisle 9. Or maybe it is; in all of *Sausage Party*'s animated hard-R depravity, nothing goes quite as deliriously bananas as the climactic supermarket orgy—a festival of food porn so gleefully, eyeball-searingly graphic, it makes *Caligula* feel like a slow day at Disney.

After slaughtering their human overlords, the movie's anthropomorphized groceries—voiced by the likes of Seth Rogen, Salma Hayek, Edward Norton, and Kristen Wiig—celebrate with a literal bang: virginal hot dog buns get the full weiner; a mustachioed flatbread makes nasty, carby babies with a begging-for-it bagel; a hunk of blue-veined Roquefort thrusts its European pelvis to the Isley Brothers' "It's Your Thing." (Something also happens involving Hayek's lesbian taco, an unsuspecting bread line, and a ball of twine that looks a lot like *The Human Centipede*—only traumatized pause buttons know for sure.) Somewhere in cartoon Gomorrah, there are surely further, filthier lines to cross. Until then, there's *Sausage*: the best wurst thing. *—Leah Greenblatt*

↓ Alden Ehrenreich and Ralph Fiennes in *Hail, Caesar!*

*HAIL, CAESAR!*: UNIVERSAL PICTURES

BREAKOUT

## Tom Holland

When Marvel Studios was auditioning Peter Parkers for a webslinger reboot, they also knew they'd need the same actor for a cameo in *Captain America: Civil War*—so then-18-year-old Tom Holland (*The Impossible*) auditioned opposite Robert Downey Jr. and Chris Evans. Leaning on his gymnastics training, Holland blew away his costars with the same stunt work and charm that audiences would discover when the Cap threequel debuted. This summer, he faced even more physical challenges filming *Spider-Man: Homecoming* (July 7, 2017). "I was upside down for everything I shot last week," Holland told EW during production. His real key to Parker is hitting the heart of what it means to be a teen who is suddenly powerful. "Peter Parker is...going through what every 15-year-old is going through, plus more," says Holland, now 20. "He has to do his chemistry homework *and* save New York." *—Anthony Breznican*

HOLLAND PHOTOGRAPH BY **MATTHIAS CLAMER**

## 4 — OPENING CREDITS

*DEADPOOL*

Even with the Marvel logo up front, *Deadpool* quickly signals that it's a little…special. The delicious vanilla sound of Juice Newton's "Angel of the Morning" scores director Tim Miller's fearless, hilarious deconstruction of a comic-book car wreck. Multiple viewings are required to get all the tongue-in-cheek credits ("Starring God's Perfect Idiot") and flyaway references, but no movie's starter course in 2016 jacked up our appetites better for the scrumptious meal to come. *—Joe McGovern*

## 5 — KEVIN'S INTERVIEW

*GHOSTBUSTERS*

It's easy to get your way when you look like Chris Hemsworth, which is probably why his *Ghostbusters* character—Kevin, the world's worst receptionist—felt no shame in asking to bring "my cat" to work. Except it's not a cat… It's a dog… And his name is Mike Hat (full name: Michael Hat). Who knew Hemsworth could wield comedic timing with the power of Thor's hammer? *—Dalene Rovenstine*

## 6 — "YOU'RE WELCOME"

*MOANA*

Disney's animated adventure is packed with memorable melodies, but it's the toe-tapping "You're Welcome" that deserves classification as a new classic. In a showstopping number written by *Hamilton*'s Lin-Manuel Miranda, Dwayne Johnson shows off his pipes as the swaggering demigod Maui, who brags about his exploits and takes credit for pretty much everything. All we can say is "Thank you." *—Devan Coggan*

↓ *Zootopia*

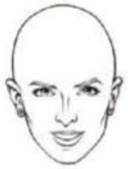
## 7 — THE ACTING CLASS

*LITTLE MEN*

The films of Ira Sachs (*Love Is Strange*) are studies of humanity in a quiet key. That's why this raucous scene, set in a kids' acting class, is such a stunner. Like a pair of alpha hyenas, teacher (Mauricio Bustamante) and student (Michael Barbieri) scream at each other ("You have a terrible attitude! *You* have a terrible attitude!") for

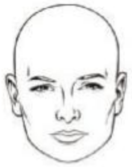
## THE WORST-WIG GAME!

CAN YOU MATCH THE TERRIBLE WIG WITH THE ACTOR WHO WORE IT? —**KEVIN P. SULLIVAN**



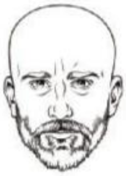
1
**ANNA KENDRICK**
*Mike and Dave Need Wedding Dates*

☐



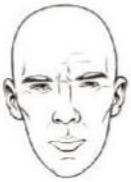
2
**REBECCA FERGUSON**
*The Girl on the Train*

☐



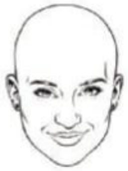
3
**BEN FOSTER**
*Warcraft*

☐



4
**BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH**
*Doctor Strange*

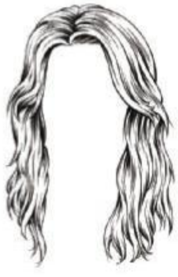
☐



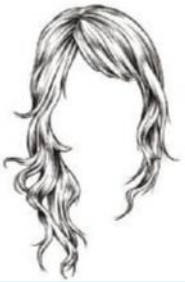
5
**SHAILENE WOODLEY**
*Snowden*

☐

A



B



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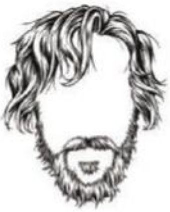
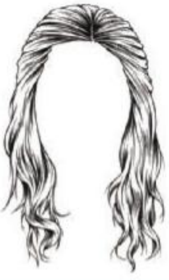
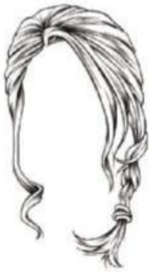


D



E



**ANSWER KEY >** 1B, 2E, 3D, 4C, 5A

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CAMERON LEWIS

two minutes of pure Pacino-esque thunder. *—Joe McGovern*

### 8 — THE DMV
*ZOOTOPIA*

Do...you...know...what made Disney's mammalian metropolis adventure a global billion-dollar blockbuster? Its shrewd satire of human behavior, best evidenced by the bunny cop Judy Hopps (Ginnifer Goodwin) as she seeks fast help at the Department of Motor Vehicles from a sociable sloth named Flash (Raymond S. Persi). It's one of the purest, simplest comedy bits this year, and simultaneously one of the realest. To quote the sloth himself, "Ha...ha!" *—Marc Snetiker*

### 9 — "MOVES LIKE FIENNES"
*A BIGGER SPLASH*

The wildest moment in Luca Guadagnino's decadent art-house drama doesn't come from Tilda Swinton's reclusive rock star or Dakota Johnson's scheming Lolita but from that paragon of aristocratic restraint, Ralph Fiennes. In a scene of utter sex-panther abandon, his dissolute record producer puts the Rolling Stones' "Emotional Rescue" on the turntable in Swinton's Mediterranean villa and moves like Jagger: strutting, grinding, and prancing into movie legend. *—Leah Greenblatt*

### 10 — THE NYC CHASE
*DOCTOR STRANGE*

No one beats the Marvel Studios movies when it comes to quality control, but they're not much to look at. Director Scott Derrickson changed that with the company's first experimental trip into the psychedelic, the centerpiece of which is the mind-bending chase scene through a kaleidoscopic New York City that owes debts to *Inception* and LSD in equal measure. *—Kevin P. Sullivan*

## THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**CUTEST KITTEN**
Keanu in *Keanu*. Purr-fect.

**GRUMPIEST CAT**
Kevin Spacey in *Nine Lives*. Me-OWWWW.

**BEST USE OF CHUNKY KNITS**
Michael Fassbender in *The Light Between Oceans*. Plenty of fans would help Fassbender scratch his itches.

**MOST PROPHETIC DOC**
*Weiner*. Only the second-most surreal political story of 2016.

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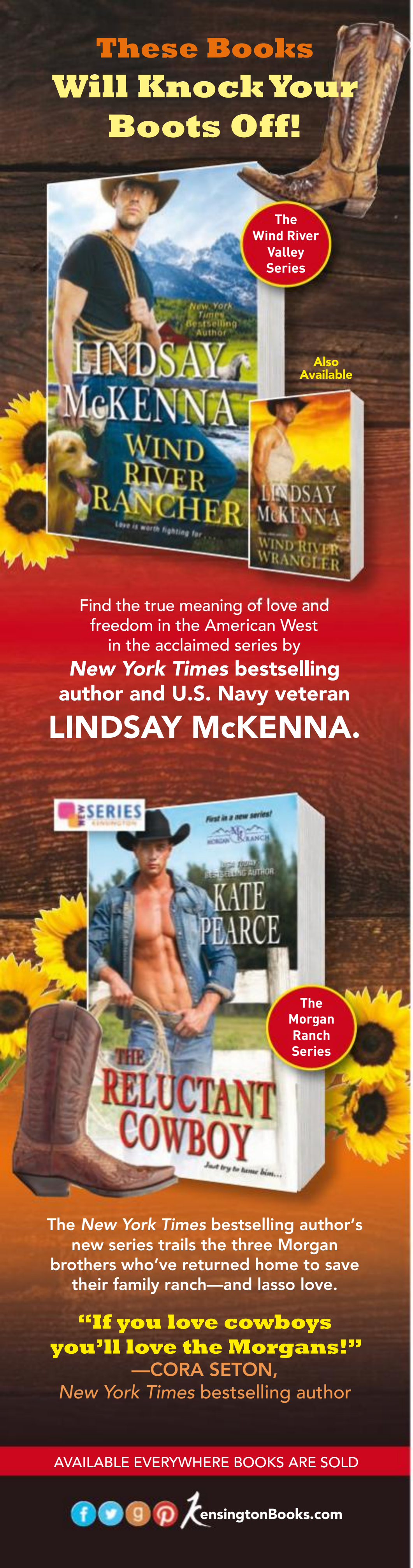

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# THE WORST FILMS OF THE YEAR

BY — *Chris Nashawaty, Kevin P. Sullivan, and Devan Coggan*

1 — **INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE**
More like *Independence Day: Regurgence*, amiright? Twenty years after his things-go-boom sci-fi blockbuster, Teutonic überhack Roland Emmerich reheats his stale sci-fi popcorn and hopes that no one will notice he's holding a chintzy bag of unpopped kernels. The movie's idea of comic relief is having Liam Hemsworth urinate on an alien spaceship. The joke's on us. Will Smith dodged a bullet. —*CN*

2 — **YOGA HOSERS**
Kevin Smith's latest is a smug, unfunny vanity project with a target audience of exactly one: Kevin Smith. The story, which involves Nazi bratwurst, plays out like a live-action adaptation of a high school stoner's notebook doodles. —*KPS*

3 — **WIENER-DOG**
Director Todd Solondz has been playing the part of indie provocateur for so long that his desire to shock has become predictable and pathetic. A series of misanthropic vignettes connected by a dachshund, this airless dud saves its most childishly tasteless outrage for the last scene, by which time it's too late to walk out. —*CN*

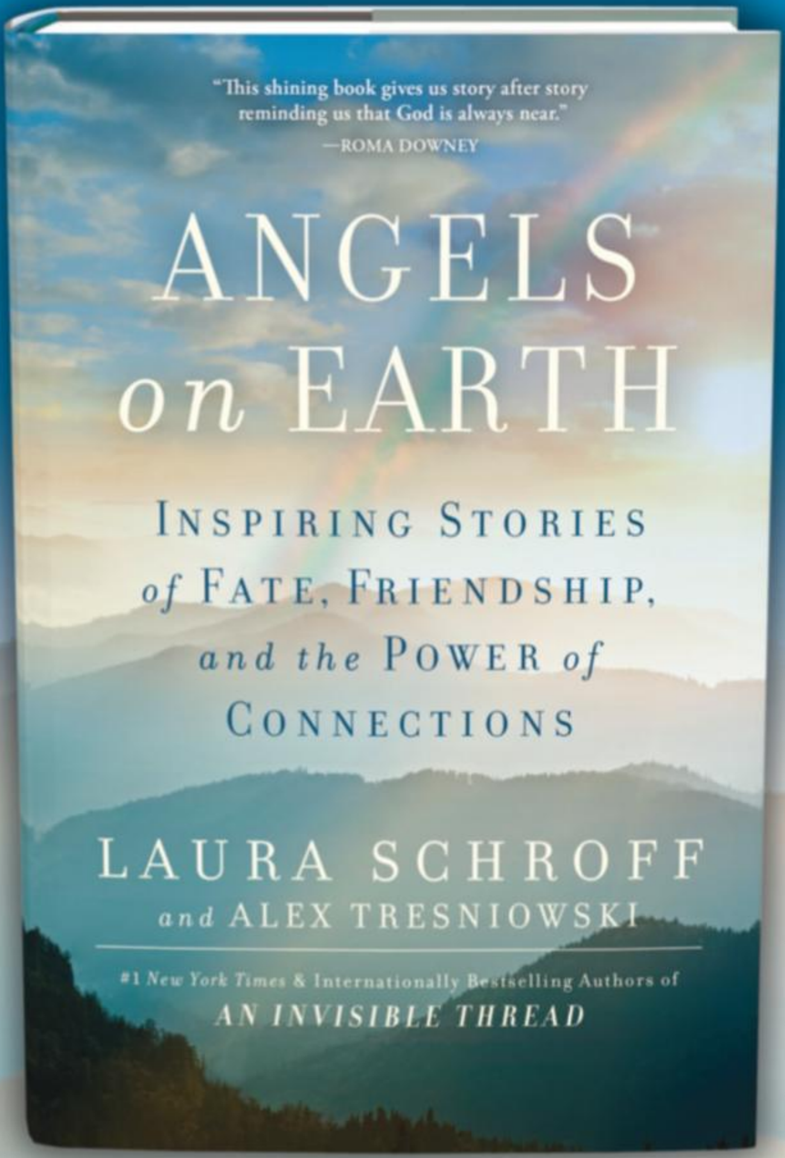
4 — **GODS OF EGYPT**
A junky special-effects howler that makes a hash out of both ancient Egyptian mythology and modern logic, Alex Proyas' sword-and-sandal trash epic throws everything at the screen (flying chariots, giant winged beetles, Gerard Butler), but none of it sticks. It's a joyless joyride, too dumb for adults and too tedious for kids. The best that can be said of *Gods of Egypt* is that it's in focus. —*CN*

5 — **NINE LIVES**
Kevin Spacey coughs up a hairball as a Trumpish New York billionaire who gets stuck in a coma and swaps bodies with a cat named Mr. Fuzzypants. With embarrassingly bad special effects and an oddly dark story line involving a suicide attempt, this "family comedy" is about as pleasant as hand-scooping the litter box. —*DC*

↓ **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP**
*Independence Day: Resurgence; Wiener-Dog; Gods of Egypt; Nine Lives*

*NINE LIVES*: TAKASHI SEIDA/EUROPA CORP; *INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE*: CLAUDETTE BARIUS/FOX; *WIENER-DOG*: SABRINA LANTOS; *GODS OF EGYPT*: LIONSGATE

At a time when the world needs
a reminder about the incredible impact
that acts of kindness can have
on the world around us, comes…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## LET'S PLAY JOKER'S WILD!

Can you correctly identify which of the following items **JARED LETO** sent to his *Suicide Squad* costars as he prepared for the role of the Clown Prince of Crime?

—KEVIN P. SULLIVAN

[ 1 ]
USED CONDOMS

[ 2 ]
ANAL BEADS

[ 3 ]
ROTTEN MEAT

[ 4 ]
LIVE RAT

[ 5 ]
PIG CORPSE

[ 6 ]
CHICKEN HEAD

[ 7 ]
BULLETS

[ 8 ]
HAIR-COVERED LIPSTICK

[ 9 ]
BLOODY PLAYING CARDS

[ 10 ]
DIRTY BAND-AIDS

**ANSWER KEY >** 1, 2, 4, 7 ARE TRUE

# CRITICAL MASS

HERE'S A LOOK AT SOME OF THE BEST- AND WORST-REVIEWED MOVIES OF 2016

| EW | THE 40 BEST | IMDb | METACRITIC | ROTTEN TOMATOES | AVERAGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | Moonlight | 87 | 99 | 98 | **95** |
| A | Manchester by the Sea | 86 | 96 | 97 | **93** |
| A | 13th | 84 | 90 | 100 | **91** |
| A– | Tower | 81 | 92 | 100 | **91** |
| A | Only Yesterday | 77 | 90 | 100 | **89** |
| A | Hell or High Water | 78 | 88 | 98 | **88** |
| A– | Embrace of the Serpent | 80 | 82 | 98 | **87** |
| A– | Kubo and the Two Strings | 80 | 84 | 97 | **87** |
| A– | Moana | 83 | 81 | 98 | **87** |
| A– | Arrival | 84 | 81 | 93 | **86** |
| A– | The Handmaiden | 81 | 84 | 94 | **86** |
| A– | Weiner | 77 | 84 | 96 | **86** |
| B+ | Gleason | 83 | 80 | 96 | **86** |
| B | Zootopia | 81 | 78 | 98 | **86** |
| B | Hunt for the Wilderpeople | 79 | 81 | 98 | **86** |
| A– | Sing Street | 80 | 79 | 97 | **85** |
| B+ | Little Men | 70 | 86 | 98 | **85** |
| B+ | The Wailing | 75 | 81 | 98 | **85** |
| A– | De Palma | 74 | 83 | 96 | **84** |
| A– | Rams | 74 | 82 | 96 | **84** |
| B+ | Don't Think Twice | 71 | 83 | 99 | **84** |
| B+ | The Edge of Seventeen | 80 | 77 | 95 | **84** |
| B+ | Krisha | 69 | 87 | 97 | **84** |
| B+ | Love & Friendship | 66 | 87 | 98 | **84** |
| B+ | Under the Shadow | 71 | 84 | 98 | **84** |
| B | Elle | 73 | 89 | 88 | **83** |
| A– | Captain America: Civil... | 80 | 75 | 90 | **82** |
| A– | The Jungle Book | 76 | 77 | 94 | **82** |
| A– | Tickled | 76 | 76 | 95 | **82** |
| B | Finding Dory | 76 | 77 | 94 | **82** |
| B | Life, Animated | 78 | 75 | 93 | **82** |
| B | Zero Days | 78 | 78 | 89 | **82** |
| A | The Lobster | 71 | 82 | 90 | **81** |
| B+ | Doctor Strange | 79 | 72 | 91 | **81** |
| B+ | Marguerite | 70 | 76 | 96 | **81** |
| B+ | Train to Busan | 76 | 72 | 96 | **81** |
| B | Command and Control | 73 | 77 | 94 | **81** |
| B | Hacksaw Ridge | 86 | 71 | 86 | **81** |
| C+ | Our Little Sister | 76 | 75 | 93 | **81** |
| C | A War | 71 | 81 | 91 | **81** |

| EW | THE 10 WORST | IMDb | METACRITIC | ROTTEN TOMATOES | AVERAGE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D | Norm of the North | 37 | 21 | 8 | **22** |
| C+ | Fifty Shades of Black | 35 | 28 | 7 | **23** |
| D– | Nine Lives | 51 | 11 | 11 | **24** |
| C+ | Disappointments Room | 43 | 31 | 0 | **25** |
| C | Nina | 51 | 27 | 3 | **27** |
| D | Mother's Day | 56 | 18 | 7 | **27** |
| B– | The Do-Over | 57 | 22 | 5 | **28** |
| C | Misconduct | 53 | 24 | 8 | **28** |
| C– | Rio, I Love You | 52 | 26 | 9 | **29** |
| D– | Yoga Hosers | 45 | 23 | 20 | **29** |

ONLY INCLUDES FILMS RELEASED BEFORE NOV. 30, 2016

↑ *The Do-Over; Norm of the North; Fifty Shades of Black; Doctor Strange; Kubo and the Two Strings*

TO READ OUR MOST RECENT REVIEWS, GO TO **EW.COM/CRITICALMASS**

*SUICIDE SQUAD*: WARNER BROS.; MEAT, BAND-AID: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO (2); RAT: PETER CHADWICK/GETTY IMAGES; CHICKEN: GETTY IMAGES/DORLING KINDERSLEY; BULLET: ANDRES CASTRO SOCOLICH/GETTY IMAGES; *THE DO-OVER*: TONY RIVETTI JR./NETFLIX; *NORM OF THE NORTH*: LIONSGATE; *FIFTY SHADES OF BLACK*: SCOTT EVERETT WHITE/OPEN ROAD FILMS; *DOCTOR STRANGE*: JAY MAIDMENT/© 2016 MARVEL. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.; *KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS*: LAIKA STUDIOS/FOCUS FEATURES

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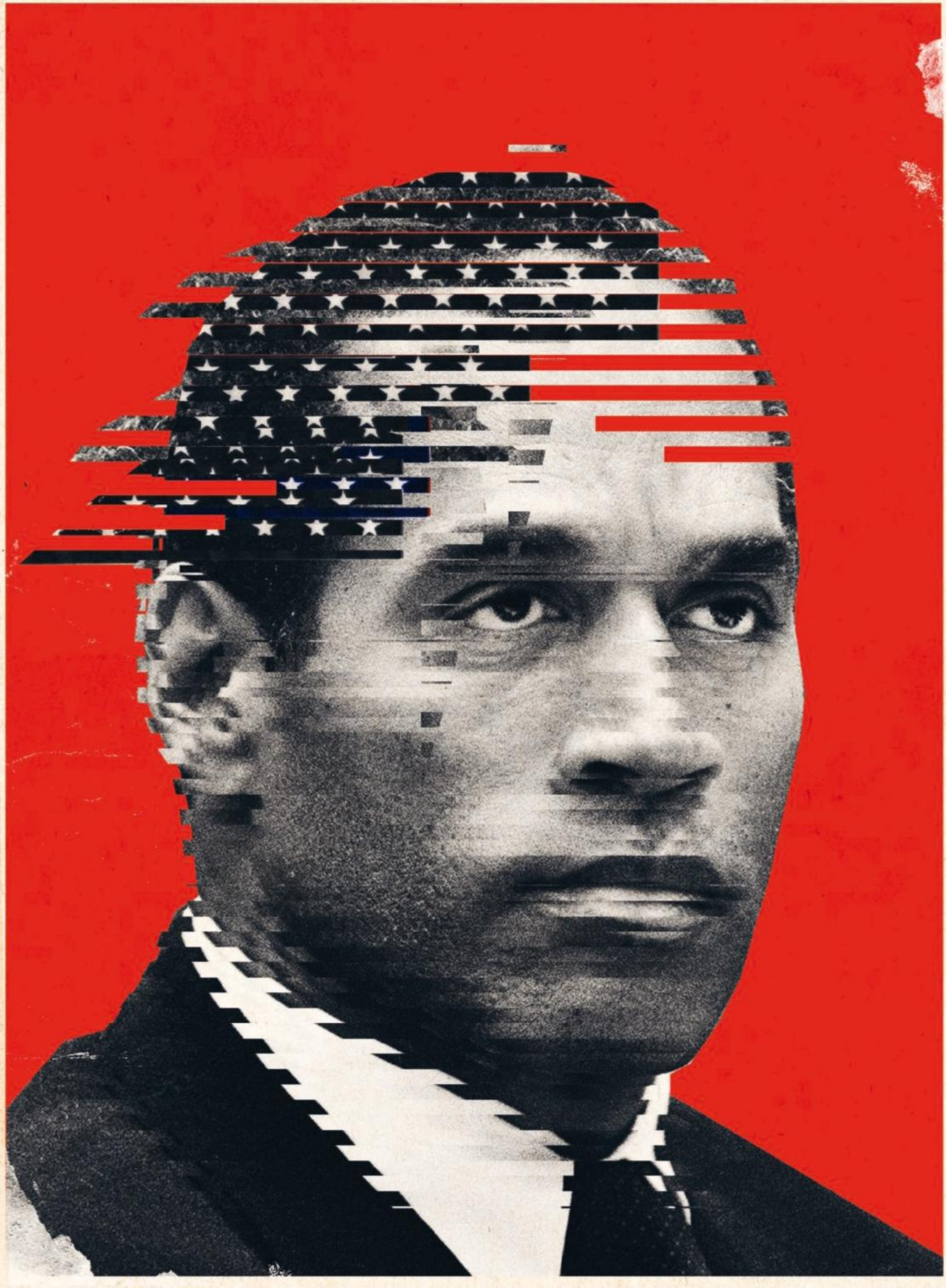


# TV

## THE YEAR'S BEST SHOWS

BY — *Jeff Jensen* ( @EWDocJensen )

### O.J.: MADE IN AMERICA

*ESPN*

No 1

**THE AMERICAN TRAGEDY THAT IS THE LIFE OF O.J. SIMPSON CONTAINS** a multitude of themes that sum up the story of us, right here, right now. Like the landscape artists who mythologized the West, filmmaker Ezra Edelman gave himself a massive canvas—a five-part, eight-hour docuseries—to craft a richly reported portrait of the football legend and deconstruct the culture that shaped, enabled, and exploited him. Edelman drilled down on race and image-making, revealing how Simpson ran away from his identity and refashioned it so he could flourish in white society and in business. But Edelman also explored the ironies of that makeover, showing how Simpson became a symbol for Los Angeles' long-suffering African-American community and provided an opportunity to strike back against racist, brutal policing. Where this epic was most powerful were the many moments in which interview subjects were captured confronting—or denying—their roles in creating Simpson and producing miscarriages of justice that still trouble us today. We see ourselves in *O.J.: Made in America*. Do we dare look?

*ILLUSTRATION BY*
**LINCOLN AGNEW**

↑ Ellie Kemper and Tituss Burgess

ERIC LIEBOWITZ/NETFLIX

## UNBREAKABLE KIMMY SCHMIDT

*NETFLIX*

### № 2

**CANDY-COLORED "CARTOON PERSON"** Kimmy Schmidt (Ellie Kemper) came down with a perplexing case of the burps, a condition rooted in unexamined hurt that subverted her sugary spirit. It was a gut-busting riot watching her unravel and get real; season 2 of TV's funniest comedy was about the importance of being breakable. Showrunners Tina Fey and Robert Carlock—impressively amping their manic, poppy voice—produced a prescient comic odyssey about personal recalibration and collective responsibility. They fixed their riskiest joke, the whitewashed Sioux identity of Jacqueline (Jane Krakowski), remaking her into a sharper satire of both white guilt and white supremacy, and Titus (Tituss Burgess) reconsidered his contrived ab-fabness via sweet romance. An extraordinary, wildly meta finale celebrated and critiqued binge escapism in fraught times that demand our engagement. We need "happy places" where we can vent our stress, but we're not meant to live there.

## No. 3

### THE AMERICANS

FX

**HOW DO WE LIVE WHEN OUR** sources of meaning—God, country, family, work—ask us to act against our conscience? Undercover KGB agents Philip and Elizabeth Jennings (Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell) went wiggy navigating these quagmires, and *The Americans* produced TV's most complex drama tracking the moral horror. A season that turned a tobacco tin containing virulent biological poison into a dynamic metaphor saw these rebels to a dying cause become utterly toxic. The stakes were apocalyptic; the battlefields were intimate. Good soldier Elizabeth destroyed an immigrant family living the American dream, snuffing out a life-giving friendship. Conscientious objector Philip tried to save sham wife Martha (Alison Wright) from the consequences of his exploitation; he succeeded only in robbing her of self-determination. *The Americans*, a period drama about the Cold War, achieved resonance by capturing the feeling of being on the wrong side of history, betrayed by your culture and yourself.

↓ Keri Russell, Holly Taylor, and Matthew Rhys

### THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**MOST ENDEARING DRUG DEALER**

The Guy (Ben Sinclair) on *High Maintenance*. Good product. *Great* listener.

**MOST INTENSE EYE CONTACT**

Frank (Kevin Spacey) and Claire Underwood (Robin Wright) in the final moments of *House of Cards*.

**MOST VILLAINOUS CARNIVORE**

Chad Johnson on *The Bachelorette*. Beware of the deli counter.

↓ Cuba Gooding Jr. and Courtney B. Vance

## No. 4

### THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON: AMERICAN CRIME STORY

FX

**2016'S OTHER HOT TAKE ON O.J. SIMPSON WAS A** must-watch of a different sort, blending poli-sci docudrama and brassy star-driven melodrama into brainy, juicy entertainment. *American Horror Story* co-creator Ryan Murphy not only affirmed the power of his hyper-pop sensibility and the anthology format, but he might have perfected both by teaming with prestige biopic scribes Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski (*The People vs. Larry Flynt*). They used their fictional license with thoughtfulness and imagination to show us what documentary cameras couldn't, and what the media of the time wouldn't, from jury deliberations to the anguish of Marcia Clark (Sarah Paulson). And they made inspired connections between the truth-scrambling hustle and warping spectacle of Simpson's (Cuba Gooding Jr.) trial and our era of vainglorious reality TV. The killer cast—including breakout Sterling K. Brown, and Paulson and Courtney B. Vance in next-level turns—gave performances as big as the personalities they played but humanized them, too, remythologizing tabloid icons into complex figures deserving empathy.

*THE AMERICANS*: PATRICK HARBRON/FX; SINCLAIR: DAVID RUSSELL/HBO; *HOUSE OF CARDS*: DAVID GIESBRECHT/NETFLIX; JOHNSON: CRAIG SJODIN/ABC; *THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON: AMERICAN CRIME STORY*: PRASHANT GUPTA/FX

## ATLANTA

FX

No 5

**WE KNEW DONALD GLOVER AS TROY BARNES ON *COMMUNITY* AND AS GRAMMY-**nominated musician Childish Gambino. Now we know him as something else: a storyteller of singular, invaluable vision. Tracking Glover's wannabe music manager Earn and his flailing efforts to stunt his weed-dealing cousin Paper Boi (Brian Tyree Henry) into a hip-hop star, *Atlanta* reframed a familiar tale of straight-outta-desperation striving into Kafkaesque existentialism for the Black Lives Matter moment. Mirroring Earn's surreal searches for promotion, paychecks, and simple survival in an absurd and dangerous world, the season itself adventurously roamed, drilling down on supporting characters like Van (Zazie Beetz), the mother of Earn's infant child, or fielding bold satire. One subplot reimagined Justin Bieber as African-American; one whole episode spoofed a BET-like roundtable talk show, complete with scathing parodies of commercials targeting black consumers. In a year rich with innovation in the comedy genre and eclectic with personal work that was nervy with broader concerns—see Maria Bamford's *Lady Dynamite*, Tig Notaro's *One Mississippi*—*Atlanta* led a revolutionary wave.

↓ Donald Glover and Brian Tyree Henry

### THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**WORST SOPHOMORE SLUMP**

*UnREAL*. We do not accept *this* rose.

**BEST SOPHOMORE BUMP**

*Supergirl*. New home, new heights.

**BEST USE OF DENIM**

Emily Gilmore (Kelly Bishop) on *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*. A whole new meaning to mom jeans.

*ATLANTA*: GUY D'ALEMA/FX; *UNREAL*: JAMES DITTIGER/LIFETIME; *SUPERGIRL*: BETTINA STRAUSS/THE CW; BISHOP: SAEED ADYANI/NETFLIX; *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*: WILL HEATH/NBC; "CARPOOL KARAOKE": CBS; PRESIDENT OBAMA: OLIVIER DOULIERY-POOL/GETTY IMAGES; WITH SAMANTHA BEE: TBS; OLIVER: ERIC LIEBOWITZ/HBO; COLBERT: SCOTT KOWALCHYK/SHOWTIME; MEYERS: LLOYD BISHOP/NBC; *BETTER THINGS*: JUSTIN LUBIN/FX

## HOW WE WATCHED THE VOTE

This unusually turbulent election resulted in boom times for the late-night industrial complex. Here are pop culture's **BEST POLITICAL MOMENTS** of the year, on a scale from funny to all-too-real. —RAY RAHMAN

SERIOUSLY FUNNY

**MICHELLE OBAMA DOES "CARPOOL KARAOKE"**
With James Corden at the wheel, FLOTUS obliterated a playlist that included Beyoncé, Stevie Wonder, and Missy Elliott—with Missy Elliott *in the car*.

**ALEC BALDWIN AND KATE McKINNON AS TRUMP AND CLINTON ON *SNL***
Baldwin's wild wigs and absurd pouts were so good, you might say they were presidential. But it was McKinnon's spirited Clinton impersonation that won our popular vote.

**OBAMA'S FINAL WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENTS' DINNER ROUTINE**
"Obama out," POTUS declared just before dropping the mic. Possibly the coolest thing to happen at Nerd Prom.

**HILLARY CLINTON ON *BETWEEN TWO FERNS***
Visiting Zach Galifianakis' delightful talk show is a rite of passage for politicians—even if it means answering, "Any regrets over losing the Scott Baio vote?"

**SAMANTHA BEE'S OBAMA INTERVIEW**
The *Full Frontal* host interviewed the president on Halloween and got him to talk about spooky stuff like sexism, climate change, and—scariest of all—millennials.

**JOHN OLIVER'S "MAKE DONALD DRUMPF AGAIN" SEGMENT**
The rabble-rousing *Last Week Tonight* host sparked a catchphrase-slash-movement when he urged voters to call then candidate Trump by his amusing ancestral family name.

**"A CLOSER LOOK" ON *LATE NIGHT WITH SETH MEYERS***
His single-topic segments, on everything from email scandals to Black Lives Matter, consistently pulled off a rare hat trick by being clever, insightful, and viral all at once.

**STEPHEN COLBERT'S LIVE ELECTION-NIGHT SPECIAL**
Like many, Colbert was clearly caught by surprise that night, but that didn't stop him from delivering a somber, graceful rumination on the state of our politics.

SERIOUSLY SERIOUS

↓ Pamela Adlon and Olivia Edward

## № 6

### BETTER THINGS

*FX*

**HERE IS THE DIVORCED SINGLE** mom, walking the long chalk lines of a soccer field in the sweltering heat, dragging a cooler of snacks. Here is the modern parent, struggling to raise three anxious and angry daughters in anxious, angry times, guiding them through the complexities of feminism and gender identity—not to mention her own messiness. And here is a knockout artistic triumph for Pamela Adlon, star and co-creator (with Louis C.K.) of *Better Things*, keeping it real and making it all wonderfully entertaining. It's reductive to say the show is only about overwhelmed single parenthood; it's also a funny, smuglite Hollywood satire about the journeyman actor's life. But it so potently captures the always-on, it's-all-on-you grind of solo parenting that it felt like a gift to those of us who walk that lonely line every day. We need a culture of better things that recognizes everyone's experience; *Better Things* advances that vital mission.

BREAKOUT

# Issa Rae

With Jay Ellis on *Insecure*

**S**

"S---!" Issa Rae says upon learning she's one of EW's breakout stars of 2016. Actually, the co-creator, writer, star, and EP of HBO's *Insecure* is surprised by a lot these days. First, there's the fact that her comedy was renewed for a second season: "Prentice [Penny, showrunner and EP] and Melina [Matsoukas, director and EP] and I lost our minds on the phone," the 31-year-old says. Then, there are the series' devout fans: "It's like 50–50, men and women, which surprises me all the time. The guys are so invested!" Rae, who plays Issa, a woman navigating career, friendships, and a long-term relationship that's seen its share of ups, downs, and soap-dispenser shopping, doesn't take the responsibility lightly. "We're telling human stories that feature black people.... This medium allows us to kick walls down and show that we all go through similar things. That is really important, now more than ever." But even after signing a two-year deal with HBO to produce additional programming from new, diverse voices, Rae does wish *some* things were different. Namely, her character's moniker, as people confuse her for *Insecure*'s Issa. "We share a lot, but I've grown a bit and am further on my journey to confidence than she is," says Rae, who used the name to identify her role back when the show was untitled and just never changed it. "That's my biggest regret, but it is what it is. At least people pronounce my name right now!" —*Caitlin Brody*

RAE: MICHAEL ROWE/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES; *INSECURE*: ANNE MARIE FOX/HBO; *RECTIFY*: JACKSON LEE DAVIS/SUNDANCE TV

## № 7

### RECTIFY

*SUNDANCETV*

**THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN NO BETTER** scene on TV this year than the sequence in *Rectify*'s season 4 premiere when ex-con Daniel Holden (Aden Young) speaks of guilt, loneliness, and an alienation so great he's forgotten what's real and can't decide if he even deserves his existence. "This may sound hokey as s---," his new mentor tells him, "but you got to figure out some way to love yourself." In the quiet, precise poetry of creator Ray McKinnon's mystery of character, there's no BS—only a thoughtful pursuit of truth, even as "truth" remains elusive and fogged. I could linger forever in its ambiguities, but that might be missing McKinnon's concluding points. An increasingly wrenching final season has dialed down the surrealism as Daniel's hazy-headed journey approaches hard revelations. Watching Daniel and his family try to divorce themselves from what's obsolete—pain, careers, each other—and step into the future as new creations has been a teary, bittersweet joy. By the finale, I might be borrowing against next year's Kleenex budget.

Aden Young

## WHICH A.I. IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Whether you're saving the world or up to no good, TV had an **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE** for you this year. We break them down on a scale from *The Jetsons'* sweet, neat Rosie to Marvel's terrorizing Ultron.

—CHANCELLOR AGARD

ROSIE

**JANET**

*THE GOOD PLACE*

For any mundane need, look no further than the ever-cheerful Janet (D'Arcy Carden). She'll use never-ending knowledge about, well, everything to answer your dumbest questions or serve your favorite meal.

**AIDA**

*MARVEL'S AGENTS OF S.H.I.E.L.D.*

Aida (Mallory Jansen) is the Swiss Army knife of A.I.s. She can restart your heart and cast spells from a grimoire that's too dangerous for mere mortals to handle.

**DOLORES**

*WESTWORLD*

Dolores (Evan Rachel Wood) is the best travel buddy, especially if you like to talk (and talk) about dreams. Plus, she isn't afraid to kick ass if plans go awry.

**ALIE**

*THE 100*

Think overpopulation is Earth's biggest problem? So did Alie (Erica Cerra), so she deployed a nuclear apocalypse. (Hopefully, that's not too extreme for you...)

ULTRON

Kristen Bell and Ted Danson

## THE GOOD PLACE

NBC

### № 8

A HIGH-CONCEPT MYSTERY-COM THAT ponders and spoofs what it means to be good, the new comedy from *Parks and Recreation* co-creator Mike Schur is a hilarious, form-busting twin to our No. 9 show, *Search Party*, albeit different in personality. Kristen Bell is pitch-perfect as Eleanor, a 21st-century Ugly American who dies, gets mistaken for a veritable saint, and ascends to an automated village with custom homes, soul mates, fro-yo shops, and Janet (D'Arcy Carden, see left), a cheery holographic concierge. Eleanor's illegal presence is allegedly causing "the good place" to malfunction, but maybe there's something intrinsically glitchy about this heavenly simulacrum, beginning with its severe standards for entry. The show is blessed by Schur's huge imagination (yep, there's a "bad place"; they snort rails of powdered time and do Nixon-tape karaoke) and smarts for serialized storytelling. But his most valuable player is Ted Danson, giving a divine comic performance as a humanity-smitten angel, the wise but beleaguered middle manager torn between legalism and grace.

### № 9

## SEARCH PARTY

TBS

**WE FIRST MET DORY (*ARRESTED*** *Development's* Alia Shawkat) gazing at a picture of a missing woman. We left her staring at her reflection, looking either profoundly lost or horribly exposed. Over the course of Dory's obsessive hunt for Gone Girls both within and without, *Search Party* skewered self-absorbed, self-projecting young adults without making them hateable, scoring sharp points about enmeshment and empathy, phoniness and friendship in our social-media culture. Creators Sarah-Violet Bliss, Charles Rogers, and Michael Showalter crafted a model of character-driven mystery, while a cast of skilled, dialed-in comedians—John Early, John Reynolds, Meredith Hagner, and an outstanding Shawkat—brought hilarity and dimension to what could have been empty caricatures. With the whole series dumped onto TBS during Thanksgiving week, *Search Party* was the best show no one binged in 2016. Seek it out.

Alia Shawkat

ROSIE THE ROBOT: HANNA-BARBERA PRODUCTIONS/PHOTOFEST; CARDEN: ROBERT TRACHTENBERG/NBC; JANSEN: JENNIFER CLASEN/ABC; WOOD: JOHN P. JOHNSON/HBO; CERRA: CATE CAMERON/THE CW; ULTRON: © MARVEL 2015; *THE GOOD PLACE*: RON BATZDORFF/NBC; *SEARCH PARTY*: TBS

AMAZON ORIGINAL

# Mozart *in the* Jungle

STREAM NEW SEASON

**DECEMBER 9**

SEASONS 1-2 NOW STREAMING

amazon Prime

↓ Thandie Newton and Jeffrey Wright

## No 10

### WESTWORLD

*HBO*

**I STILL LOVE YOU, *MR. ROBOT*, BUT** in 2016 my passion for provocative serial in a corporate-controlled, reality-blurred world belonged to HBO's blockbuster entertainment about blockbuster entertainment gone haywire. Plus, it had actual robots. Beat that, fsociety! *Westworld* satisfied our want for immersion in mystery, while questioning the value of getting lost in such things. But it also provided a meditation on identity as fiction and prison, powerfully embodied by Evan Rachel Wood, Thandie Newton, and Jeffrey Wright. They rocked a tough challenge: getting us to care about androids lacking any authentic character. Most resonant was their manipulative, authoritarian author (Anthony Hopkins), a mad showrunner-in-chief campaigning to make his buggy storytelling machine great again. Throw in twist-ending shockers to match our political moment, and *Westworld* stands as the first zeitgeist drama of the Trump era. Congratulations?

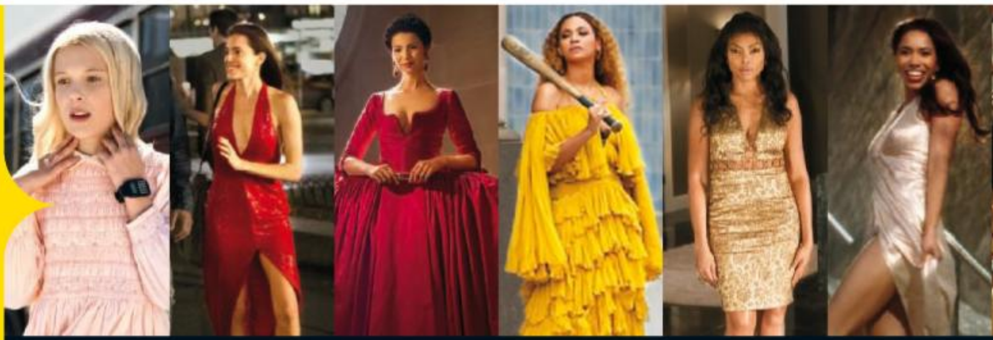
## TV'S TIME

| | |
|---|---|
| WHAT'S THE SHOW? | <br>**OUTLANDER**<br>*STARZ* |
| WHY DO THEY WANT TO GO TO THERE? | Claire (Caitriona Balfe) leaves the 1700s for her 1948 present to protect her baby girl with Jamie (Sam Heughan). Twenty years later, she returns to find him again. |
| HOW THE HECK DO THEY DO IT, ANYWAY? | By touching a series of standing stones at Craigh na Dun. |
| HOW MUCH HISTORY KNOWLEDGE DO I NEED TO KEEP UP? | An understanding of 18th-century Scotland and the Jacobite risings would be useful. (If only the Frasers had a chance to study them, too...) |

**THE REST OF THE BEST SHOWS OF THE YEAR** **11** Crazy Ex-Girlfriend *(The CW)* **12** American Crime *(ABC)* **13** black-ish *(ABC)* **14** Mr. Robot *(USA)* **15** Documentary Now! *(IFC)*

## WATCH THE RAINBOW

Colorful costumes—and characters—dominated TV's biggest moments this year. Enjoy our spectrum of unforgettable looks.



**ELEVEN** MILLIE BOBBY BROWN *Stranger Things*

**MARNIE** ALLISON WILLIAMS *Girls*

**CLAIRE** CAITRIONA BALFE *Outlander*

**BEYONCÉ** *Lemonade*

**COOKIE** TARAJI P. HENSON *Empire*

**MYLENE** HERIZEN F. GUARDIOLA *The Get Down*

## OBSESSION

The biggest star of the small screen this year? The space-time continuum. Several series had characters hop eras to tell head-spinning, mind-bending stories. Here's how seven of them toyed with time—and how you can make sense of it all without traveling back to history class yourself. —**SHIRLEY LI**

| <br>**11.22.63**<br>*HULU* | <br>**TIMELESS**<br>*NBC* | <br>**DC'S LEGENDS OF TOMORROW** *THE CW* | <br>**THE FLASH**<br>*THE CW* | <br>**FREQUENCY**<br>*THE CW* | <br>**TIME TRAVELING BONG**<br>*COMEDY CENTRAL* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| English teacher Jake Epping (James Franco) goes back to the '60s to prevent the assassination of John F. Kennedy. | The ragtag team chases a supervillain (Goran Višnjić) while protecting history. Think *Legends of Tomorrow* but without superpowers. | The ragtag team chases a supervillain (Casper Crump) while protecting changes to the past *and* the future. Think *Timeless* but without government conspiracies. | Barry (Grant Gustin) loves running through decades of his life. Before Flashpoint, he runs to unsave his mother. Then, to save her. Then, to unsave her... Make up your mind! | This one's a little tricky: Raimy (Peyton List), in 2016, finds a way to save her father's life in 1996, but the butterfly effect then twists *hers*. Yeah, don't overthink it. | After bumbling cousins Sharee (Ilana Glazer) and Jeff (Paul W. Downs) accidentally blaze through time and break the titular apparatus, they try to fix it—and find more weed. |
| In the pantry of a diner, there's a portal—or "rabbit hole"—that bridges 2016 with 1960. | By operating a state-of-the-art time-and-space-ship called the *Lifeboat*.<br> | By operating a state-of-the-art time-and-spaceship called the *Waverider*. | By going through a wormhole created via the Speed Force. | By talking into an old ham radio struck by lightning.<br> | By smoking a mystical bong.<br> |
| Brush up on your JFK conspiracy theories, but don't get in *too* deep—it's easy to get tangled in a web of guesswork. Just ask Jake! | The team's historian Lucy (Abigail Spencer) delivers the facts, but cameos like Bonnie and Clyde's are more fun if you've read Wikipedia. (That's not too difficult, is it?) | This romp through time is easy on the history. Keeping track of the crew members, however, takes some work. | The Fastest Man Alive can't quit his past, so make sure to review his *personal* history. | All you need is a heavy dose of '90s nostalgia. | Literally none at all. |

**16** Better Call Saul *(AMC)* **17** Roots *(History)* **18** Lady Dynamite *(Netflix)* **19** Stranger Things *(Netflix)* **20** Horace and Pete *(louisck.net)*

**QUEEN ELIZABETH II**
**CLAIRE FOY**
*The Crown*

**REBECCA**
**RACHEL BLOOM**
*Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*

**ISSA**
**ISSA RAE**
*Insecure*

**DOLORES**
**EVAN RACHEL WOOD**
*Westworld*

**SELINA**
**JULIA LOUIS-DREYFUS**
*Veep*

**JONATHAN**
**TOM HIDDLESTON**
*The Night Manager*

**SAMANTHA BEE**
*Full Frontal With Samantha Bee*

**KELLY**
**GUGU MBATHA-RAW**
*Black Mirror*

**CERSEI**
**LENA HEADEY**
*Game of Thrones*

*WESTWORLD*: HBO; *OUTLANDER*: STARZ ENTERTAINMENT; *11.22.83*: RUSS MARTIN/HULU; *TIMELESS*: SERGEI BACHLAKOV/NBC; TIME MACHINE: JOE LEDERER/NBC; *DC'S LEGENDS OF TOMORROW*: CATE CAMERON/THE CW; *THE FLASH*: KATIE YU/THE CW; *FREQUENCY*: BETTINA STRAUSS/THE CW (2); *TIME TRAVELING BONG*: CLAIRE FOLGER/COMEDY CENTRAL; *STRANGER THINGS*: CURTIS BAKER/NETFLIX; *GIRLS*: MARCK SCHAFER/HBO; *OUTLANDER* (SIDEBAR): NEIL DAVIDSON/STARZ ENTERTAINMENT; *LEMONADE*: PARKWOOD ENTERTAINMENT; *EMPIRE*: CHUCK HODES/FOX; *THE GET DOWN*: NETFLIX; *THE CROWN*: ALEX BAILEY/NETFLIX; *CRAZY EX-GIRLFRIEND*: SCOTT EVERETT WHITE/THE CW; *INSECURE*: ANNE MARIE FOX/HBO; *WESTWORLD* (SIDEBAR): JOHN P. JOHNSON/HBO; *VEEP*: LACEY TERRELL/HBO; *THE NIGHT MANAGER*: DES WILLIE/AMC; *FULL FRONTAL WITH SAMANTHA BEE*: TBS; *BLACK MIRROR*: LAURIE SPARHAM/NETFLIX; *GAME OF THRONES*: HELEN SLOAN/HBO

# 10 BEST EPISODES

↓ Sarah Paulson and Sterling K. Brown

## “MARCIA, MARCIA, MARCIA”

*THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON: AMERICAN CRIME STORY*
(FX)

**№ 1**

RAY MICKSHAW/FX

## 2 — “BATTLE OF THE BASTARDS”

*GAME OF THRONES* (HBO)

It was one of the best episodes of the year, but it may also have been the best hour of *Game*’s entire run. “Battle of the Bastards” staged an epic clash between resurrected hero Jon Snow (Kit Harington) and the sadistic Ramsay Bolton (Iwan Rheon) that took 500 extras and 25 days to film and managed to outshine most megabudgeted Hollywood event films. With an Emmy-winning script that excelled at intimate moments (Davos finding Shireen’s burned toy) as well as spectacle (that thundering horse charge!), “BoB” played like a master class in coherent, character-driven action storytelling, elevating director Miguel Sapochnik (who also won an Emmy for this hour) to TV’s directorial A list. *—James Hibberd*

## 3 — “THE MAGIC OF DAVID COPPERFIELD V: THE STATUE OF LIBERTY DISAPPEARS”

*THE AMERICANS* (FX)

FX’s unparalleled drama offered an unforgettable hour halfway through a season where three years’ worth of simmering plots had exploded in bright, bloody colors. “Copperfield” opens with the wordless departure of Alison Wright’s tragic mole, Martha,

**WE ALL JUDGED MARCIA CLARK. SHE WORE** ill-fitting suits. She didn't have a stylish haircut. And she failed at convicting O.J. Simpson of murder in front of all of America. One of the most beautiful aspects of FX's brilliant *The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story* was that the skillful, tireless Clark finally got her due. While the lawyer has been a punchline for nearly 20 years, *The People v. O.J.* dug deeper and presented a fully formed portrait of the single mother of two. The sixth episode of the limited series, directed by executive producer Ryan Murphy and written by Emmy winner D.V. DeVincentis, took viewers through the gauntlet that Clark endured during the case—from her painful divorce to the tabloid exploitation of her. The sexism and unfair scrutiny she faced are most vividly portrayed after she returns to court fresh from a salon visit and has her new tight curls openly mocked by colleagues. As she sits humiliated in the courtroom, the look on Clark's face (seen through the stunning, career-defining performance by Sarah Paulson, who deservedly won the Emmy) punches the gut. Simpson was the suspect, but Clark was the one we put on trial. *—Tim Stack*

that left us speechless and concludes with a confident seven-month time jump, underscoring the dreamlike misery of its central characters (Keri Russell and Matthew Rhys) with an unsubtle, mesmerizing televised vanishing act of American symbolism. Directed by Rhys himself, the episode was a flawless exercise in frozen tension and the brutal sacrifices we make to survive—Russian spy or not. *—Marc Snetiker*

↓ Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell on *The Americans*

*THE AMERICANS*: PATRICK HARBRON/FX; AHMED: ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

## BREAKOUT

## Riz Ahmed

Did Naz do it? The question kept viewers of the HBO crime drama *The Night Of* on the edge of their seats all summer, but it was star Riz Ahmed's (ahem) arresting performance that had them hoping the answer was no. Yet the British actor, 34, was just relieved that people watched at all. "When we first filmed, I honestly thought there's *too much* amazing TV," Ahmed confesses. "This is going to get lost in the mix and no one's going to see it!" Fortunately he was wrong, and his profile has skyrocketed ever since. "In America it's every other dude shouting, 'Yo, Naz! You the killer?'" While the jury's still out, Ahmed has been busy. He appeared in *Jason Bourne* and released his Swet Shop Boys hip-hop album, and now he's entering the Force in *Rogue One*. The mania has already begun: "I noticed a big difference during the Swet Shop Boys tour. Suddenly there were people with *Star Wars* memorabilia for me to sign. That's not something that usually happens at rap shows. I think it's the start of a coming tide." *—Ray Rahman*

**BATS OFF!**

IT WAS TV'S HOME-RUN ACCESSORY

## 4 — PILOT

*THIS IS US* (NBC)

A great pilot draws you into its universe, fires your imagination, and makes you fall for its characters. If it fools you in the process, all the better. This emotionally supercharged dramedy introduced us to a couple (Milo Ventimiglia and Mandy Moore) expecting triplets, a family man (Sterling K. Brown) seeking out his biological father, an actor (Justin Hartley) quitting a sitcom, and his twin sister (Chrissy Metz) resolving to lose weight. Then it yanked the rug out from under us, revealing its feel-good foundation: The couple were the parents of the other three, and the story was unspooling in different time periods. Shock and awww. *—Dan Snierson*

↓ Mandy Moore and Milo Ventimiglia on *This Is Us*

RON BATZDORFF/NBC

## 5 — "SAN JUNIPERO"

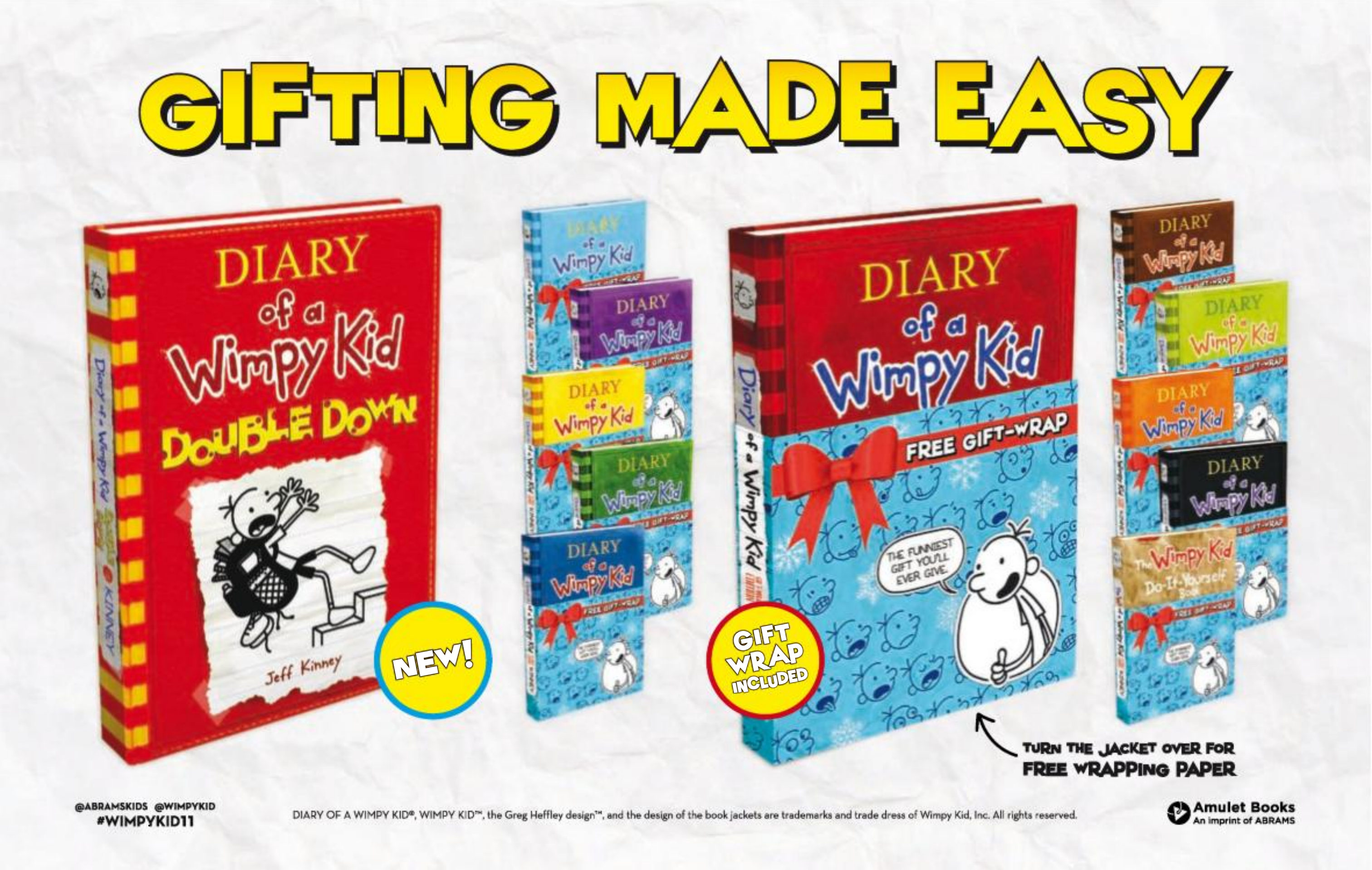
*BLACK MIRROR* (NETFLIX)

A neon-tinged ray of hope amid *Black Mirror*'s array of dystopian tech hellscapes, "San Junipero" was perhaps the year's most unexpected delight: a stand-alone tale following two women (Mackenzie Davis and Gugu Mbatha-Raw) as they navigate a dreamy 1980s seaside town and strike up an unlikely romance across time and space. *Black Mirror* can harrowingly dramatize the worst consequences of Silicon Valley's innovations, but the final moments of "Junipero," directed by Owen Harris, suggest a reassuring vision for humanity where everything isn't just going to be okay but gnarly and tubular, too. *—James Hibberd*

## 6 — "KISSING YOUR SISTER"

*VEEP* (HBO)

The short tenure of President Selina Meyer (Julia Louis-Dreyfus) got the documentary treatment thanks to Catherine (Sarah Sutherland), the angsty First Daughter who spent months filming her mother's goings-on in the Oval Office. The same *Veep*ian delights we've come to love—gross incompetence, grosser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# TV'S BEST MUSICAL MOMENTS

Music and TV don't always mix (Hugh Jackman in *Viva Laughlin*, anyone?), but this has been a surprisingly harmonious year for musical TV. Here are the clips that we couldn't stop replaying and that inspired our karaoke outings all year long. — **CHANCELLOR AGARD**

**CRAZY EX-GIRLFRIEND** THE CW
**"The Math of Love Triangles"**
*Rachel Bloom*

This geometry-pun-filled parody put Rebecca's (Bloom) delusional belief that she's at the center of a love triangle on display while critiquing the trope.

**TRANSPARENT** AMAZON
**"Hand in My Pocket"**
*Judith Light*

Shelly Pfefferman's (Light) one-woman show was a triumphant moment for an oft-ridiculed character and brought this dark season to an uplifting end.

**SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE** NBC
**"Hallelujah"**
*Kate McKinnon*

Solemn and inspiring, McKinnon's tribute to presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and the late Leonard Cohen was the tear-filled catharsis that many needed postelection.

**MR. ROBOT** USA
**"Everybody Wants to Rule the World"**
*Portia Doubleday*

Overwhelming despair pervaded Doubleday's moving and unsteady karaoke version of Tears for Fears' 1985 hit.

**GREASE LIVE!** FOX
**"You're the One That I Want"**
*Julianne Hough and Aaron Tveit*

It was the highest-rated live musical since 2013, which isn't surprising given its electrifying numbers like this one. We've got chills just remembering it.

**THIS IS US** NBC
**"Time After Time"**
*Chrissy Metz*

Metz's cover of the Cyndi Lauper classic at a nursing home soars—and not coincidentally, it's one of the few times the show doesn't focus on her character's weight-loss journey.

**THE LATE LATE SHOW WITH JAMES CORDEN** CBS
**"Monster"**
*Adele*

On "Carpool Karaoke," the singer revealed that she, like the rest of us, spent 2010 memorizing Nicki Minaj's song-stealing verse.

**THE GET DOWN** NETFLIX
**"Get Down Brothers vs. Notorious 3"**
*Skylan Brooks, Tremaine Brown Jr., Jaden Smith, Justice Smith, and Shameik Moore*

The Get Down Brothers prevailed over their rivals with this boisterous set that sampled the *Star Wars* theme song *and* the Jackson 5.

**EMPIRE** FOX
**"Infamous"**
*Mariah Carey and Jussie Smollett*

The Elusive Chanteuse made her long-awaited debut as Kitty, an R&B diva, on the hip-hop soap in season 3, teaming up with Smollett for this sultry, intimate ballad.

*THE WALKING DEAD*: FRANK OCKENFELS 3/AMC; *LEMONADE*: PARKWOOD ENTERTAINMENT; *EMPIRE*: CHUCK HODES/FOX (2); *CRAZY EX-GIRLFRIEND*: ROBERT VOETS/THE CW; *TRANSPARENT*: JENNIFER CLASEN/AMAZON STUDIOS; *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*: WILL HEATH/NBC/NBCU PHOTO BANK VIA GETTY IMAGES; *GREASE LIVE!*: MICHAEL BECKER/FOX; *THIS IS US*: RON BATZDORFF/NBC; *THE LATE LATE SHOW WITH JAMES CORDEN*: CRAIG SUGDEN/CBS; *THE GET DOWN*: COURTESY OF NETFLIX

↓ Marsai Martin, Marcus Scribner, Miles Brown, and Yara Shahidi on *black-ish*

insults—are seen from a fresh, personal perspective, giving the hapless Meyer administration new layers of comedic sadness. The result is unlike any other in the series' five seasons, full of hilariously candid interviews and "behind-the-scenes" peeks at how democracy really works...or doesn't. —*Ray Rahman*

### 7 — "CHAPTER ONE: THE VANISHING OF WILL BYERS"

*STRANGER THINGS* (NETFLIX)

There's a unique feeling one gets from watching '80s films like *E.T.* and *The Goonies*. That same exhilarating rush could be felt from the first moments of the Duffer Brothers' pitch-perfect homage, *Stranger Things*. The first chapter introduced us not only to the compelling central mystery (12-year-old Will's abduction by an otherworldly creature) but also to the winning young cast and their now-iconic characters. Most important, this episode established *Things*' effortless mix of sweetness and scares. —*Tim Stack*

### 8 — "HOPE"

*BLACK-ISH* (ABC)

*Black-ish* has never been afraid to load its comedy with social commentary, but this episode elevated the game with a thoughtful debate on police brutality and systemic racism that still left room for laughs. With Dre (Anthony Anderson) arguing that their children need to learn the system is rigged, Bow (Tracee Ellis Ross) trying to find optimism in the world, and the kids caught square in the middle, a raw, nuanced discussion about thorny issues blossoms like a rose. Plus, Dre drops some sick rhymes about soap. —*Dan Snierson*

### 9 — "SEASON TWO: EPISODE SEVEN"

*AMERICAN CRIME* (ABC)

John Ridley's anthology returned for a quietly absorbing second season focused on the fallout from an alleged sexual assault involving two high school boys, Taylor (Connor Jessup) and Eric (Joey Pollari). Jessup's beaten-down teen, played brilliantly by the young actor, hits his limit in the seventh episode and shoots a classmate. The climactic moment where Taylor visits his mother (Lili Taylor) at work and reveals what he's done left viewers as decimated as his mom. —*Tim Stack*

### 10 — "THE PANIC IN CENTRAL PARK"

*GIRLS* (HBO)

This beautiful Marnie-centric episode, written by Lena Dunham and directed by Richard Shepard, packs in some of the most poignant punches from *Girls*' terrific fifth season. With the surprise return of Christopher Abbott as Charlie, Marnie (Allison Williams) is reunited with her old love, but he looks and talks like a different person. It's an installment that feels dreamy and different from *Girls*' usual Brooklyn milieu—stretching to Manhattan's tony uptown and Central Park—only to return Marnie home completely changed, with dirty bare feet from a walk through Chinatown to prove it. —*Sara Vilkomerson*

## THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**BIGGEST EXPLOSION**
King's Landing gets pulverized on *Game of Thrones*.

**BIGGEST IMPLOSION**
Thomas Gibson gets booted from *Criminal Minds*.

**BEST BACKSTROKE**
U.S. swimmer Ryan Murphy, who won gold in the 100m, 200m, and 4x100 relay.

**WORST BACKPEDAL**
U.S. swimmer Ryan Lochte, who claimed he was robbed at a Rio gas station, only to later apologize that he "overexaggerated" the story.

BLACKISH: PATRICK WYMORE/ABC/GETTY IMAGES; CRIMINAL MINDS: CLIFF LIPSON/CBS; MURPHY: JEAN CATUFFE/GETTY IMAGES; LOCHTE: DAVID LIVINGSTON/GETTY IMAGES

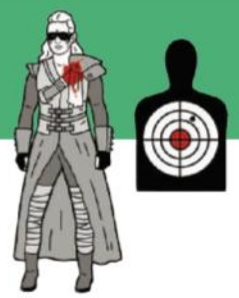
FAUXBITUARY

# GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

WE SALUTE THIS YEAR'S FALLEN **TV HEROES** IN THE ORDER THEY LEFT US, WHETHER THEY'RE RESTING IN PEACE OR, IN SOME CASES, PIECES.

( BY )
**MARC SNETIKER**

( ILLUSTRATIONS BY )
**KYLE HILTON**

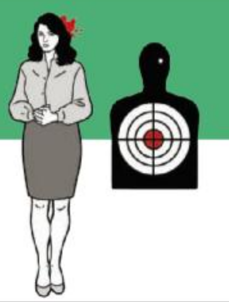


01

**LEXA** — *Shot March 3*

***The 100*** (The CW)

The star-crossed end that led to the beginning of a tragic trend of LGBT deaths; 100 apologies are necessary.

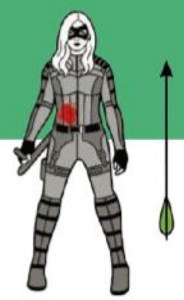


02

**NINA** — *Executed April 6*

***The Americans*** (FX)

The Russian spy was executed for switching her allegiance. Thankfully, we never lost ours.

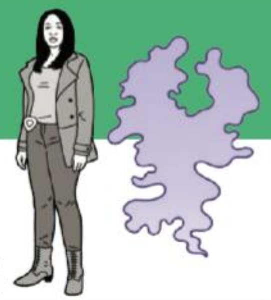


03

**LAUREL** — *Bull's-eyed April 6*

***Arrow*** (The CW)

It ain't over until the Black Canary sings. Or gets stabbed with her ex-boyfriend's stolen arrow. Or both.

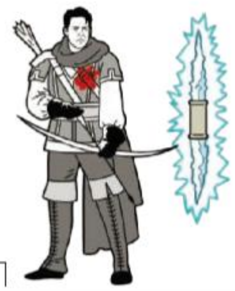


04

**ABBIE** — *Departed this mortal plane April 8*

***Sleepy Hollow*** (Fox)

After nearly 50 eps, *someone* has to sacrifice their soul in another realm...

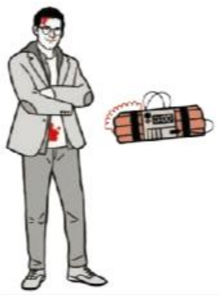


05

**ROBIN HOOD** — *Killed May 8*

***Once Upon a Time*** (ABC)

Death rarely makes sense, let alone when it's the result of a fight between *Snow White*'s Evil Queen and Hades.

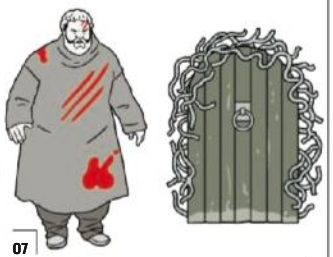


06

**SIMON** — *Sacrificed May 15*

***Quantico*** (ABC)

No one rocked a Henley—or drove a nuclear bomb into a river—quite like this geeky government agent.

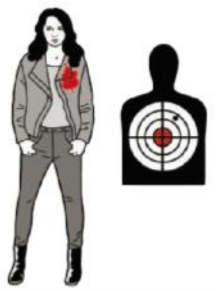


07

**HODOR** — *Held a door May 22*

***Game of Thrones*** (HBO)

Politely barring an entryway never killed anyone. Or at least anyone who didn't live in Westeros.

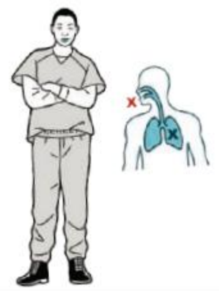


08

**ROOT** — *Gunned down May 31*

***Person of Interest*** (CBS)

If only we could tell this heroic hacker that she didn't need to take a bullet... But the show is canceled, anyway!

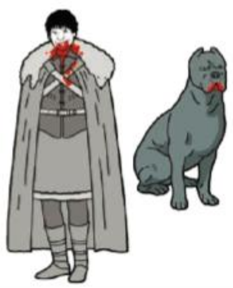


09

**POUSSEY** — *Binge-died June 17*

***Orange Is the New Black*** (Netflix)

She died tragically when crushed by a prison guard—another reminder why it's wrong to grab Poussey.

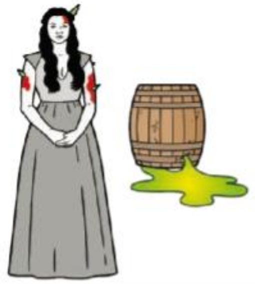


10

**RAMSAY** — *Mauled June 19*

***Game of Thrones*** (HBO)

They left him to the dogs, and he went out like a bitch.

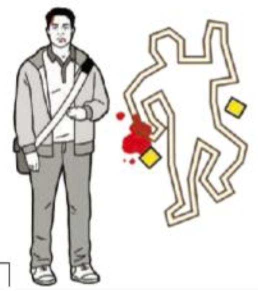


11

**MARGAERY** — *Felt the heat of wildfire June 26*

***Game of Thrones*** (HBO)

We're in such denial about the queen's death, we could just explode!

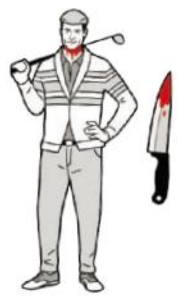


12

**RYAN** — *Jumped Oct. 4*

***Halt and Catch Fire*** (AMC)

The rising programmer's harrowing suicide was such a gut punch, it made us want to reset the whole system.

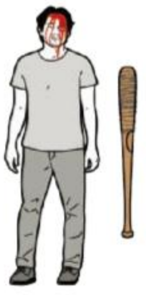


13

**CHAD** — *Went stag Oct. 11*

***Scream Queens*** (Fox)

God save the Queens after their wedding murder of their douchey king.

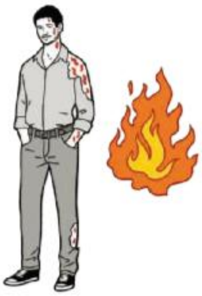


14

**GLENN** — *Got smashed Oct. 23*

***The Walking Dead*** (AMC)

If anyone should've seen a bat coming, it's the guy in the baseball cap.

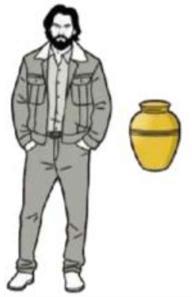


15

**WES** — *Up in flames Nov. 17*

***How to Get Away With Murder*** (ABC)

The student died as he lived: dressed in plaid, in the shadows of Viola Davis.



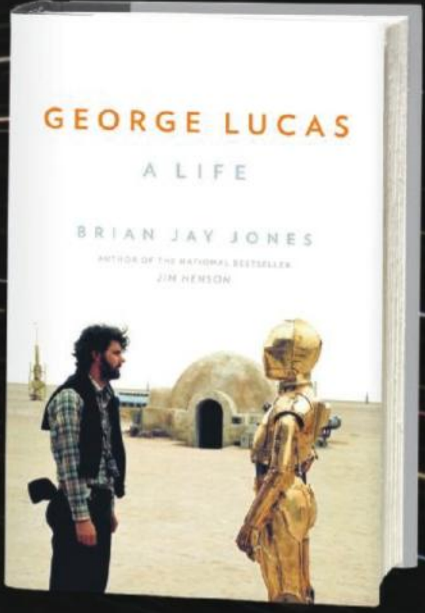
16

**JACK** — *Died at some point after the late '70s*

***This Is Us*** (NBC)

Uncertain: when and why.
Certain: how many tissues we'll need.

ATTENTION STAR WARS FANS. THIS IS THE BIOGRAPHY YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!



"Beautifully obsessive"
—Brad Meltzer

"MASTERFUL"
—*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

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# THE WORST SHOWS OF THE YEAR

BY — *Jeff Jensen*

1 — **WHO KILLED JONBENÉT?**
*LIFETIME*

With hot trends, you take the good and the gross. Last year the true-crime wave unleashed by Serial gave us *The Jinx*. That was good. This year: *Who Killed JonBenét?* It was gross, a sensationalistic cash-grab that mixed schlocky re-creations and news footage. The queasiest choice? Having Phoebe Lawrenson narrate as "JonBenét" from beyond the grave. *The Lovely Bones* this was not.

2 — **FULLER HOUSE**
*NETFLIX*

Best reboot of the year? *Gilmore Girls*. Absolute worst? *Fuller House*, a needless, cynical exercise in nostalgiasploitation that insulted fans with lazy execution and just-drifting-through mugging from John Stamos, Bob Saget, and Dave Coulier. And the meta-shaming of nonparticipants Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen? How rude.

3 — **THE FAMILY**
*ABC*

A boy presumed dead returns home more than 10 years later, jolting an ambitious politico mom (Joan Allen). Everything intriguing was subverted by tortured characterization, ridiculous plotting, and dubious casting. Taken with the lackluster *Conviction* and *Notorious*, ABC's Shondaland-forged genre of potboiler soap may be tapped out.

4 — **THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW: LET'S DO THE TIME WARP AGAIN**
*FOX*

This corporate remake of the cult classic was DOA zombie pop. Had it been live, it might have felt alive. But the cast couldn't match the manic energy of the original players. Incorporating the crowd-participation rituals only accentuated the going-through-the-motions hollowness of the whole dead-inside thing.

5 — **VINYL**
*HBO*

Martin Scorsese and Terence Winter were given a reported $100 million to create the next great drama. Instead, they produced the year's costliest novelty record, a flashy mix of cliché scuzz, full of hideous male riffs and way too much coke snorting. Wasted: a ready-to-rock cast led by Bobby Cannavale. And our time.

↓ **CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT** *The Rocky Horror Picture Show; The Family; Vinyl; Who Killed JonBenét?; Fuller House*

*THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW*: STEVE WILKIE/FOX; *THE FAMILY*: BOB D'AMICO/ABC; *VINYL*: HBO; *WHO KILLED JONBENET?*: BOB AKESTER/LIFETIME; *FULLER HOUSE*: MICHAEL YARISH/NETFLIX

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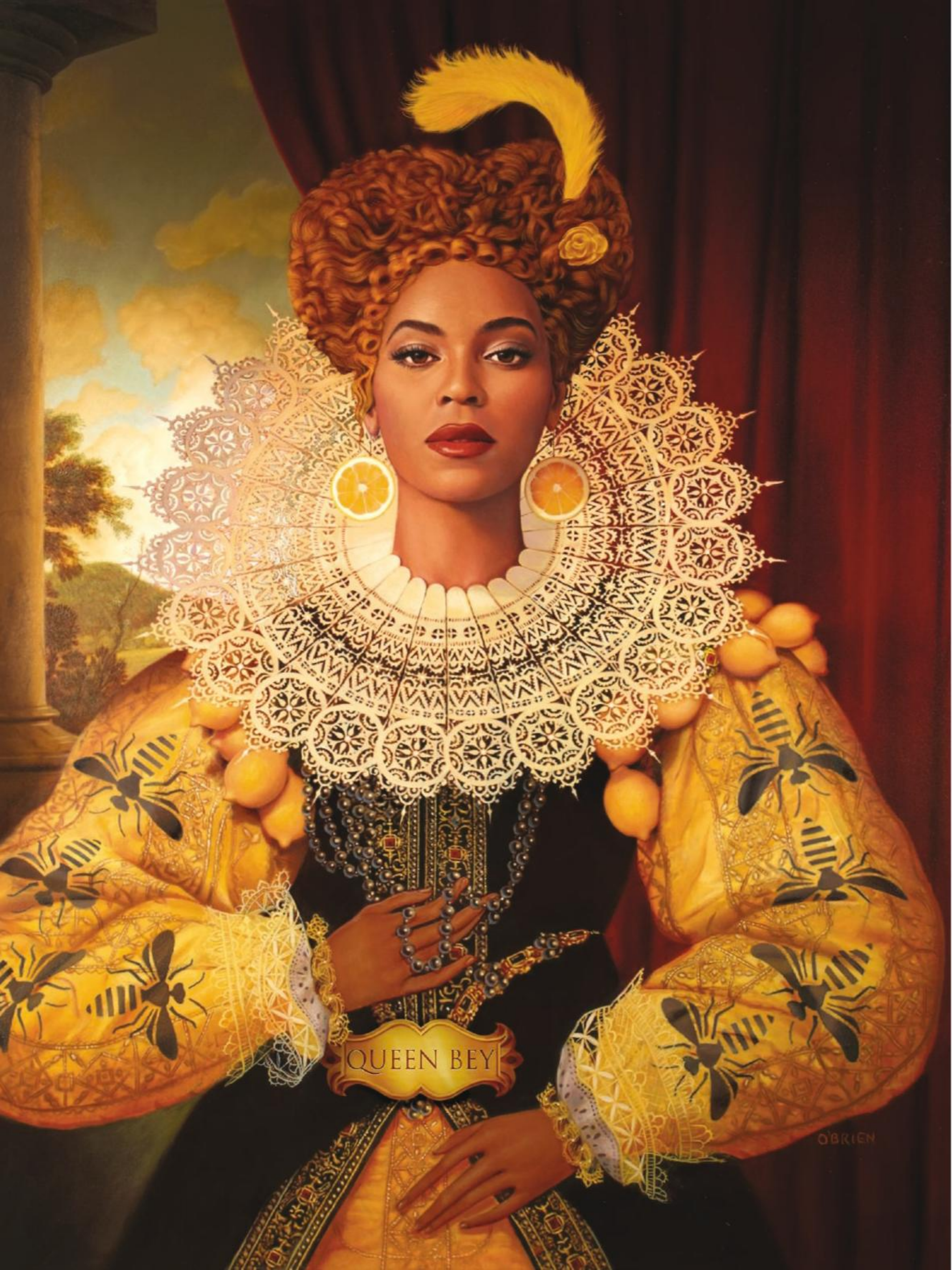

QUEEN BEY
O'BRIEN

# MUSIC

## THE YEAR'S BEST ALBUMS

BY — *EW STAFF*

### LEMONADE

BEYONCÉ

№ 1

**"YOU KNOW YOU** that bitch when you cause all this conversation," Beyoncé purrs toward the end of *Lemonade*—and whoo, girl, did she have everyone talking in 2016. Two days after Prince died, she snapped us out of mourning with a feature-length visual album that touched on practically every corner of popular music—including rock, country, and reggae—while spilling a juicy tale of infidelity that left some wondering if she was surprise-releasing divorce papers, too. But Beyoncé didn't highlight a marriage in crisis just to stoke tabloid intrigue. She did so to tell a larger story about the struggles and triumphs that black and marginalized women everywhere experience. It's no wonder Beyoncé has been taking over awards shows and live streams with epic medleys of singles *and* deep cuts. Every track here deserves its own celebration, from the aching ballad "All Night" to the trunk-rattling "Formation," whose central command is a fitting metaphor for music in 2016: Beyoncé leads the pack. Everyone else is just trying to get in line. *—Nolan Feeney*

*PAINTING BY*
TIM O'BRIEN

## No. 2

### BLACKSTAR

DAVID BOWIE

***BLACKSTAR* BEGINS WITH A 10-MINUTE SUITE OF WONDERFULLY** warped jazz fusion. It ends with “I Can’t Give Everything Away,” an impossibly gorgeous anthem that soars nearly as high as his indelible 1977 classic “Heroes.” And in between, rock & roll’s most adventurous soul continues to destroy every convention of pop music—and he does it all with profundity, mystery, grace, sadness, and humor. (He also has clutch assistance from his backing band, the heretofore obscure Donny McCaslin quartet—can you imagine being on the receiving end of *that* introductory phone call?) David Bowie’s swan song, released two days before his surprising death on Jan. 10, isn’t just one of the best albums of 2016; it’s one of the finest creative statements of his five decades at the vanguard. What a farewell. —*Kevin O’Donnell*

## № 3

### ANTI

RIHANNA

**CALL IT** ***THE EMANCI****pation of RiRi*; after more than a decade churning out albums stacked with glossy mainstream bangers, pop's clockwork Barbadian retreated for an unprecedented three-year incubation. And what emerged was *ANTI*: a dense collection of deep cuts that deliberately turned its cheek to the Hot 100—yet still yielded "Work," the longest-running No. 1 of her career. Nearly every moment here, from the dusky dubstep swagger of "Consideration" to the vintage-soul swoon "Love on the Brain," feels like the liberated work of a superstar who decided finally, rightfully, that she could be an artist, too. —*Leah Greenblatt*

## № 4

### 99.9%

KAYTRANADA

**LEAVE IT TO** Kaytranada to unite a divided nation. If you caught any of this Haitian-born Canadian DJ's shows in 2016, you would've seen a diverse crowd of B-boys, B-girls, frat bros, seen-it-all hipsters—the huddled masses yearning to dance free. That inclusionary vibe courses through his essential debut, capturing how most non-one-percenters survived this weird year: with fierce hip-hop, ecstatic disco, free-form jazz, sexy booty calls, tender love songs. And thanks to our hero's gift for the groove, it's all woven into a 15-track celebration of oneness. Send a copy to Trump Tower. —*Kevin O'Donnell*

### THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**WORST ALBUM TITLE**

The 1975's *I Like It When You Sleep, for You Are So Beautiful yet So Unaware of It*

**BEST ALBUM TITLE**

Dawes' *We're All Gonna Die*

**MOST WELCOME (AND TIMELY) COMEBACK**

A Tribe Called Quest

## № 5

### A SAILOR'S GUIDE TO EARTH

STURGILL SIMPSON

**WHEN STURGILL** Simpson released his stellar second album, *Metamodern Sounds in Country Music*, two years ago, he was heralded as the genre's new keeper of the flame. He could've cared less: With his latest, *A Sailor's Guide to Earth*, the Kentucky native made the country record of the year—largely by torching every contemporary Nashville cliché. This marvelous album skillfully blends brassy, 1960s-style soul, riff-fueled rock & roll, orchestral bombast, and a totally awesome, totally WTF cover of Nirvana's "In Bloom" into an approachable and intimate yarn about family and fatherhood. —*Madison Vain*

## № 6

### PUBERTY 2

MITSKI

**IN AN ERA THAT** often makes indie rock feel like the last dusty refuge of white-male monotony, 26-year-old Mitski Miyawaki swept in to blow out the cobwebs with her dazzling, idiosyncratic *Puberty 2*—a reverbed symphony of confession and catharsis that echoes the best of bygone alt heroes' jagged riffs even as it bristles with her own spiky 21st-century poetry. Somewhere there's a parallel universe where "Happy" sells Old Navy knitwear to the masses, and "Your Best American Girl" is the stadium anthem of the year. —*Leah Greenblatt*

## № 7

### COLORING BOOK

CHANCE THE RAPPER

**WHILE SUPERSTARS** Kanye West and Justin Bieber line the credits, the rising Chicago MC's jubilant third mixtape is ultimately an ode to his Christian faith and hometown. Chance remains one of the Windy City's most outspoken activists—he decries its rash of gun violence again on "Angels" and "Summer Friends"—but elsewhere he trains his razor-sharp lyricism on parenting challenges, faded friendships, and the music industry. But while *Coloring Book*'s subject matter isn't always uplifting, its narrator is: His unflappable optimism conveys genuine reassurance at every turn, a revelation for hip-hop in 2016. —*Eric Renner Brown*

## № 8

### HOPELESSNESS

ANOHNI

**POP MUSIC** might not be the most obvious tool for social change, but Anohni's *Hopelessness* proved that crafting earworms and galvanizing your inner activist aren't mutually exclusive. And while the pointed political content of songs like "Drone Bomb Me" might be the last thing you'll want to hear after the election, her calls to action won't depress you. In fact, they'll inspire you: to examine your own role in the world, to consider your power to enact change—and yes, even to hit the dance floor. —*Nolan Feeney*

A TRIBE CALLED QUEST: CHAD BATKA/*THE NEW YORK TIMES*/REDUX

# Kiiara

T

This time last year, Kiiara was celebrating a new record deal in the least glamorous way: by having her tonsils removed. Now the 21-year-old Wilmington, Ill., native is getting recognized by Uber drivers and recently had the surreal experience of hearing her song "Gold" blast across the salon where she was getting her nails done. It's a big adjustment for an artist who began her music career in semi-anonymity and actively avoided sharing biographical information. "I still feel the same," she says, "so when someone's like, 'I like your song!' I have to remind myself, 'Oh, I *do* have a song out.'"

And "Gold" isn't just any song, either. With a hook built around vocal samples that are impossible to sing along to, it managed to crack the Top 40 while completely defying conventions of what a radio hit sounds like. "[Producer Felix Snow and I] didn't get into the studio to say, 'We're going to make a pop song,'" Kiiara says. "It was more like, 'Let's just make what we like. People can love it or hate it.'"

In this case, the people who loved it included some of her biggest idols. Lil Wayne remixed "Gold" last month, and Kiiara has found a mentor and collaborator in Linkin Park's Mike Shinoda, whose band she cites as a major influence. "If I ever need advice, I can just call him up," Kiiara says. For someone who hadn't performed live before this year—her sixth show ever was at Lollapalooza in August—such rapid success might be overwhelming. But for Kiiara, there's no such thing as too much too soon. "I can't wait for the next tour in bigger venues, and the one after that," she says. "When I'm not working, that's not good. I can't go back to my apartment. What am I going to do, stare at the walls?" *—Nolan Feeney*

KIIARA: NESRIN DANAN; DIE ANTWOORD: ERIKA GOLDRING/FILMMAGIC; MACKLEMORE: PARAS GRIFFIN/GETTY IMAGES

## № 9

### MALIBU

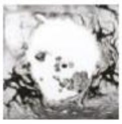
ANDERSON .PAAK

**YOU KNOW YOU'RE** having a good year when showing up on A Tribe Called Quest's final album is just icing on the cake. So it was for Anderson .Paak, whose collaboration-filled 2016 was anchored by a phenomenal breakout album of his own: *Malibu*, an exuberant blast of feel-good hip-hop. With a mix of old-school R&B, trippy neo-soul, and gospel-infused earworms, the West Coast artist's triumphant second record dominated headphones and house parties, making him one of the few things everyone could agree on in a year where that seemed impossible. *—Ray Rahman*

## № 10

### A MOON SHAPED POOL

RADIOHEAD



**THE BEST ALBUMS** are the ones that unveil mind-blowing new sonic details with every subsequent listen. It's a trick Radiohead have mastered since their 2000 masterpiece, *Kid A*. On *A Moon Shaped Pool*, the 21st century's most visionary art-rockers proved they have a seemingly endless font of brilliant music ideas, from the swelling orchestral nightmare "Burn the Witch" to the stunning revision of the years-old fan favorite "True Love Waits." *—Kevin O'Donnell*

## THE WORST ALBUMS OF THE YEAR

1 — **MOUNT NINJI AND DA NICE TIME KID**
*DIE ANTWOORD*
The South African oddballs used to fuse EDM and rap in ways that were as nuts as they were fun. Now they just make songs with titles like "Wings on My Penis" and "U Like Boobies?". *Womp womp.*

2 — **JUNK**
*M83*
How do you follow up a breakout hit like "Midnight City"? By trolling, apparently: With kitschy novelty songs and little substance behind those retro synths, the album's title was truth in advertising.

3 — **CALIFORNIA**
*BLINK-182*
Don't call it a comeback! Actually, don't call it anything. The less said about torturous pop-punk filler tracks like the howling "Los Angeles," the better.

4 — **HEAD CARRIER**
*PIXIES*
No Kim Deal? That's a deal breaker for the alt-rock icons' latest, where the absence of the pioneering bassist means a lack of mojo, too.

5 — **THIS UNRULY MESS I'VE MADE**
*MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS*
Frontman Macklemore's commitment to social justice is admirable, but six-minute-plus tracks about his Grammys guilt and white privilege are better in theory than practice.

↓ ***FROM TOP***
Die Antwoord's Ninja and Yolandi Visser; Macklemore

EW See EW's expanded list of the 50 Best Albums of 2016 at **ew.com/bestalbums2016**

# THE YEAR'S BEST SONGS

## № 1

## FORMATION

BEYONCÉ

**BLACK-GIRL-MAGIC MANIFESTO, POSTFEMINIST** call to arms, most potent celebration of personhood this side of Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself": No one piece of music could ever claim to be all things to all people, but "Formation" lands pretty damn close. (Even Red Lobster gets a boost.) Released on the eve of the Super Bowl, the lead single from the still-shrouded-in-mystery *Lemonade* came on like its own colossus: This was pop music politicized, diversified, electrified to the nth degree. Over that strange, shivery twang of a bass line, Beyoncé twirled on her haters, tweaked Bill Gates, and laid out the mandate for every lady (or restless little girl, or bullied boy in suburbia) who dared to doubt their own destinies. It slayed. —*Leah Greenblatt*

ANDREW WHITE/INVISION FOR PARKWOOD ENTERTAINMENT/AP IMAGES

### 2 — WORK FROM HOME

*FIFTH HARMONY*

With its vacuum-sealed beat, sexy-stupid puns, and a video that makes Miley Cyrus' "Wrecking Ball" look like an OSHA safety seminar, this girl group offered the year's most deliriously fun ride. Even the HR lady approves. —*Nolan Feeney*

### 3 — REAPER

*SIA*

Not since Blue Öyster Cult has pop music taken on the guy with the black cloak and the scythe so memorably. The anomalous Australian pop star's antisuicide PSA, written and produced with Kanye West, is both joyful and defiant: a blithe celebration of all the reasons she'll live to die another day. —*Leah Greenblatt*

### 4 — ULTRALIGHT BEAM

*KANYE WEST*

Kanye West billed *The Life of Pablo* as a gospel album, a sentiment epitomized by the rousing opener, "Ultralight Beam." Co-written by xfinity

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↓ Solange Knowles on *SNL* on Nov. 5

Chance the Rapper, who also delivers a scene-stealing verse, the song's lurching synths and muted trumpets perfectly complement West's message about striving to be better, down to Kirk Franklin's tear-jerking, nobody's-perfect spoken-word coda. *—Eric Renner Brown*

### 5 — CRANES IN THE SKY

*SOLANGE KNOWLES*

Meaningless sex, shopping sprees, workaholism. Knowles' poetic rumination debunks that such pursuits will cure loneliness or heartbreak, so she prescribes a cure-all with "Cranes in the Sky," a string-laden ballad that's so warm and inviting, it'll comfort the coldest heart. *—Kevin O'Donnell*

### 6 — VICE

*MIRANDA LAMBERT*

She could have given Nashville another shiny, boot-stomping take on romantic misdemeanors. But instead of blowing up an ex's spot or burning down his backyard, Lambert delved into her own darkness, lamenting late nights and last calls on a crackling, laid-bare confessional—easily the year's best song about bad choices. *—Leah Greenblatt*

### 7 — BOYFRIEND

*TEGAN AND SARA*

Take the giddiness and anxiety of early-stage romance; throw in a clever, queer-inclusive examination of relationship roles; then dress it up with a sing-along hook and

## THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**QUEEN OF B SIDES**

Carly Rae Jepsen

**BEST BLAST FROM THE PAST**

The *Stranger Things* soundtrack

**BEST BLAST FROM THE FUTURE**

DΛWN's *Redemption*

**BEST MUSICAL HUG**

Norah Jones' *Day Breaks*

**MOST IN NEED OF A HUG**

Justin Bieber

## THE WEIRDEST, WILDEST MUSIC FEUDS OF THE YEAR

—RUTH KINANE

**ADELE VS. TONY VISCONTI**

Never one to mince words, the sassy star refuted the producer's claims that computer manipulation powered her vocals. Visconti apologized soon after; maybe it's all "Water Under the Bridge" now?

**JUSTIN BIEBER VS. SELENA GOMEZ**

It's way too late to say sorry: Their never-ending breakup raged on through their Instagram comments, with accusations of cheating.

**KANYE WEST VS. THE WORLD**

No one was immune to his ire. Beyoncé, Hillary Clinton, Jay Z, Taylor Swift—all were targets for the outspoken rapper.

**MARIAH CAREY VS. J. LO**

Ten years ago in a TV interview, Carey dissed Jennifer Lopez by claiming "I don't know her." But after J. Lo called Carey "forgetful" this year, the phrase was revived as 2016's shadiest, funniest put-down.

**TAYLOR SWIFT VS. CALVIN HARRIS**

Once Swift revealed she was a writer on her ex's hit "This Is What You Came For," he slammed her online. There might not be bad blood: He later thanked her for the help.

**DRAKE VS. MEEK MILL**

After Mill accused Drake of not writing his own raps last year, their beef continued in 2016, with Drake calling out his foe at a concert in Mill's hometown of Philadelphia. Ouch.

**ELTON JOHN VS. JANET JACKSON**

Sir Elton claimed Miss Jackson lip-synched during her live shows, adding that he'd rather see a drag queen perform.

**TIDAL VS. APPLE MUSIC**

The battle of the streaming services continued: While Jay Z's Tidal had exclusive releases from Beyoncé and West, Apple Music hit back with first looks at Frank Ocean and Drake. The losers? Consumers.

SOLANGE: DANA EDELSON/NBCU PHOTO BANK/GETTY IMAGES; JEPSEN: GABRIEL OLSEN/WIREIMAGE; BIEBER, SWIFT: JASON MERRITT/GETTY IMAGES (2); ADELE: LUCA TEUCHMANN/GETTY IMAGES; VISCONTI: GETTY IMAGES FOR ANCHOR; BIEBER (FEUDS): KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES; GOMEZ: JON KOPALOFF/FILMMAGIC; WEST: SCOTT DUDELSON/FILMMAGIC; EARTH: GETTY IMAGES/CULTURA RF; CAREY: FILMMAGIC; LOPEZ: BARRY KING/GETTY IMAGES; HARRIS: GARETH CATTERMOLE/GETTY IMAGES; DRAKE: KEVIN MAZUR/AMA2016/WIREIMAGE; MEEK MILL: MINDY SMALL/FILMMAGIC; JOHN: HARRY HERD/REDFERNS; JACKSON: ALEXANDER TAMARGO/GETTY IMAGES; JAY Z: KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES FOR ROC NATION; TIM COOK: BLOOMBERG VIA GETTY IMAGES

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↓ Tegan and Sara

shimmering production. Welcome to the coolest Intro to Gender Studies course you'll ever take, courtesy of Canada's finest. —*Nolan Feeney*

### 8 — NIKES

*FRANK OCEAN*

The R&B singer daringly pitch-shifts his voice for the first half—but with forward-thinking production, richly detailed lyrics, and a cinematic peak that showcases Ocean's angelic croon, it's an instant classic. —*Eric Renner Brown*

### 9 — ADORE

*SAVAGES*

The most blistering rock & roll song of the year, "Adore" is a slow burn of distorted guitars and amp fuzz that gives way to a fit of apocalyptic drums. But doom and gloom this ain't. It climaxes with frontwoman Jehnny Beth hollering a simple but nonetheless inspiring mantra: "I adore life!" —*Jessica Goodman*

### 10 — BETTER MAN

*LITTLE BIG TOWN*

### THIS IS WHAT YOU CAME FOR

*CALVIN HARRIS*

Taylor Swift released no solo material in 2016, but she still dominated as a songwriter. And while these two songs are wildly different—her ex-boyfriend Harris cut a dance-floor epic; Little Big Town crooned a perfect country ballad—both cement her as one of her generation's finest songsmiths. —*Kevin O'Donnell*

EW See EW's expanded list of the 100 Best Songs of 2016 at **ew.com/bestsongs2016**

## THE WORST SONGS OF THE YEAR

### 1 — "ONE NIGHT"

*LIL YACHTY*

The teens may love him, but the Atlanta rapper's exaggerated lethargy and fondness for Auto-Tune is a losing combo.

### 2 — "GHOSTBUSTERS (I'M NOT AFRAID)"

*FALL OUT BOY FEAT. MISSY ELLIOTT*

If you're looking for a new reason to hate Hollywood's reboot obsession, here it is: Even Missy couldn't save this unnecessary take on an iconic theme song.

### 3 — "I HATE U, I LOVE U"

*GNASH FEAT. OLIVIA O'BRIEN*

These two scored a hit singing about conflicting feelings, but the uninspired melody and blasé rhymes only inspire one emotion in us. And it's not a good one.

### 4 — "TWO BIRDS, ONE STONE"

*DRAKE*

Sure, Kid Cudi started the feud, but for Drake to take shots at the rapper's mental health after Cudi checked into rehab for "depression and suicidal urges" is a low blow.

### 5 — "PRIVATE SHOW"

*BRITNEY SPEARS*

The pop icon's *Glory* LP featured some of her best vocals in years—with the exception of this grating, unpolished boudoir jam. Can we have Robotney back?

↓ **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** Lil Yachty; Missy Elliott; Fall Out Boy's Pete Wentz and Patrick Stump

TEGAN AND SARA: PAMELA LITTKEY; LIL YACHTY: LAURA CAVANAUGH/GETTY IMAGES; ELLIOTT: ERIKA GOLDRING/GETTY IMAGES; WENTZ: SHIRLAINE FORREST/WIREIMAGE; STUMP: ROSS GILMORE/REDFERNS

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- 36 NILLA Wafers
- 2 Tbsp. orange juice
- 1/4 cup raspberry jam
- 8 oz. white candy coating wafers (about 1-1/2 cups)
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- Assorted decorations: decorating icing, coarse colored sugars, holiday sprinkles, crushed starlight mints, and/or additional melted vanilla candy wafers tinted red and green

### INSTRUCTIONS

**BRUSH** flat sides of 24 NILLA Wafers with juice, then spread with jam.

**PLACE** remaining wafers, rounded sides up, on waxed paper-covered baking sheet; top each with 2 jam-topped wafers, jam sides down. Refrigerate 6 hours or until firm enough to handle.

**MELT** candy wafers as directed on package; stir in oil until blended. Dip NILLA stacks, 1 at a time, in melted candy wafers, turning to evenly coat stack and reheating candy wafer mixture if needed. Return to baking sheet. Immediately drizzle with decorating icings or melted candy wafers; sprinkle with sugar, sprinkles, or crushed candies.

**REFRIGERATE** 30min. or until candy coating is firm. Keep refrigerated.

Discover more holiday recipes today at **Pinterest.com/NILLAWAFERS**

# THE 10 BEST CONCERTS

FROM LADY GAGA'S INTIMATE DIVE BAR TOUR TO COLDPLAY'S ARENA CELEBRATIONS, THE TOP SHOWS EW SAW THIS YEAR:

**1 — ADELE**

Who caught Adele this year? Tweens, cool moms, couples on first dates, college kids, gals out for ladies' night—everyone. Why did they go? To laugh, cry, dance, and sing at the top of their lungs with pop's premiere voice.

**2 — BEYONCÉ**

The Beyhive swarmed to see their Queen, but even nonbelievers—do they actually exist?—were dazzled by the show's sheer sensory overload: an extravaganza of smash singles and spilled *Lemonade*, boosted by weapons-grade dance routines and one wild, wet finale (BYO splash guard).

**3 — BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**

The Boss played his sentimental double LP, 1980's *The River*, start to finish at every stop. But that didn't come at the expense of his towering catalog. In fact, by the tour's conclusion, the 67-year-old icon was pushing his already record-breaking gigs past the four-hour mark.

**4 — RIHANNA**

Carefully synced choreography, "Hello, Cleveland" stage patter, and elaborate set changes? Not for Bad Girl RiRi, thank you. Instead, the star did things her own way, darling, with a loose-limbed, sexy set long on hit singles and fresh *ANTI* cuts. It felt like something major pop acts' stadium shows almost never do: a genuine take-that-tequila-shot-and-get-on-the-dance-floor party—thrown by one hell of a hostess.

**5 — DRAKE AND FUTURE**

Forget Drake's Instagram-worthy light show or Future's eye-catching dancers—the best part of this coheadlining tour was the structure. Instead of opening for him, Future popped up in the middle of Drake's curfew-pushing set for one turn-up intermission that kept the night from dragging.

**6 — LCD SOUNDSYSTEM**

The best live band in America now: James Murphy and his crew (shout-out to singer-keyboardist Nancy Whang—forever the coolest girl in the room) turned festival grounds and intimate clubs into sweaty discos.

**7 — LADY GAGA'S DIVE BAR TOUR**

Not feeling Gaga's new sound? Seeing her jam with collaborators like Mark Ronson and Hillary Lindsey in front of a few hundred people could convert even the most skeptical fans to the church of *Joanne*—as long as they were lucky enough to get a ticket.

**8 — PEARL JAM AT BONNAROO**

Over two thunderously loud hours, the grunge veterans ripped through the classics ("Given to Fly"! "Better Man"! "Alive"!), called out then-presidential hopeful Donald Trump, and covered Pink Floyd's "Comfortably Numb" and Neil Young's "Rockin' in the Free World." Twenty-six years into their career, it felt as if Pearl Jam were only getting started.

**9 — COLDPLAY**

Most arena bands cap a concert with fireworks. Not Coldplay. Chris Martin & Co. introduced confetti and pyrotechnics to their outdoor gigs early on and delivered the feel-good event of the year, especially during euphoric singalongs like "Yellow" and "A Head Full of Dreams."

**10 — THE 1975 AT COACHELLA**

The British quartet turned out one of the best sets at this year's Palm Springs desert bash, thanks to twinkling dance-pop tunes that were as pretty as the Snapchat-obsessed ravers in the front row.

↑ Adele live in Phoenix on Nov. 21

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# BOOKS

## *THE* YEAR'S BEST FICTION & NONFICTION

BY — *EW STAFF*

### THE NIX

*BY*
NATHAN HILL

№ 1

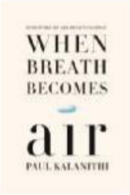
**IF ANY NOVEL DEFIED AN ELEVATOR PITCH IN 2016, IT WAS *THE NIX*.** Acid critique of millennial entitlement, videogame addiction, and clueless academia; tender meditation on childhood friendship, first loves, and maternal abandonment; handy tutorial on '60s radicalism and Norwegian ghost mythology: Nathan Hill's magnificently overstuffed debut contains multitudes, and then some. At the core of its wild narrative rumpus sits Samuel Andresen-Anderson. A listless adjunct at a middling Midwestern college, he spends most days raiding pixelated orcs in *World of Elfscape* and trying not to think too much about the shambles his life has become in the two decades since his mother walked out the door one bright fall morning and didn't come back. When she suddenly reemerges—as the subject of a scandalous viral video, no less—the story surges, ricocheting from sleepy '80s suburbia and the 1968 DNC riots to WWII-era Norway, post-9/11 Iraq, and beyond. It's not just that Hill is a brilliantly surreal social satirist in the gonzo mode of Don DeLillo or Thomas Pynchon (a male news anchor's face is "smooth as cake fondant"; one doomed union is "like a spoon married to a garbage disposal"), it's that he does it all with so much wit and style and heart. *—Leah Greenblatt*

*ILLUSTRATION BY*
**JULES JULIEN**

## № 2

### WHEN BREATH BECOMES AIR

BY PAUL KALANITHI



**"I CAN'T GO ON. I'LL** go on." Diagnosed with terminal cancer at 36, Kalanithi recalled Samuel Beckett's famous words—then began to write down his own. *Breath* is the gifted neurosurgeon's extraordinary account of facing a suddenly altered future: What happens when the doctor becomes the patient, and a young man loses his chance to grow old? This slim volume answers those questions and more—not with tea-mug bromides on bravery or dry medical jargon, but with fierce, tender honesty and almost unimaginable grace. —*Leah Greenblatt*

## № 3

### HOMEGOING

BY YAA GYASI

Yaa Gyasi
Homegoing
a novel

**THE DIVERGING FATES** of two half sisters born villages apart in 18th-century Ghana echo down through generations in Gyasi's stark, lyrical debut. From their twined bloodlines spring slaves and warriors, sharecroppers and coal miners, jazz singers and junkies and Ph.D. students—each one brought vividly to life in sequential chapters. The sweep of *Homegoing*'s narrative across eras and continents is indisputably epic, but the clean economy of Gyasi's writing makes nearly every word in its 300 pages radiate, too vital and valuable to waste. —*Leah Greenblatt*

## № 4

### LAROSE

BY LOUISE ERDRICH

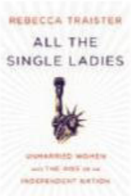
LaRose
Louise Erdrich

**ERDRICH HAS BEEN** draped in literary accolades over the years—but they never weigh her down in this stirring tale of two Native American families bound together by a heartbreaking tragedy. After recovering alcoholic Landreaux Iron accidentally shoots and kills his neighbor's 5-year-old son, he and his wife—after consulting the tribal sweat lodge—gift the grieving family with their own 5-year-old, LaRose. It's a brilliant examination of the impulses behind both revenge and forgiveness—and a primer on the ways a heart can heal. —*Isabella Biedenharn*

## № 5

### ALL THE SINGLE LADIES

BY REBECCA TRAISTER



**IT TAKES A GIFTED** writer to conjure an addictive, fascinating read out of centuries of dense facts and census data, but that's exactly what journalist Traister does in this illuminating history of unmarried women. Using wide-ranging research as well as interviews, she delves into the different ways singlehood affects women of varying races, socioeconomic brackets, and sexual orientations—and explains how surges in the numbers of single women throughout history have coincided with social change. —*Isabella Biedenharn*

### THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**CELEBRITY PUBLISHERS**
Lena Dunham, Sarah Jessica Parker, and Michael Mann landed their own book imprints.

**UGLIEST LITERARY OUTING**
An Italian journalist exposed the true identity of Elena Ferrante, the pseudonymous author of the Neopolitan novels.

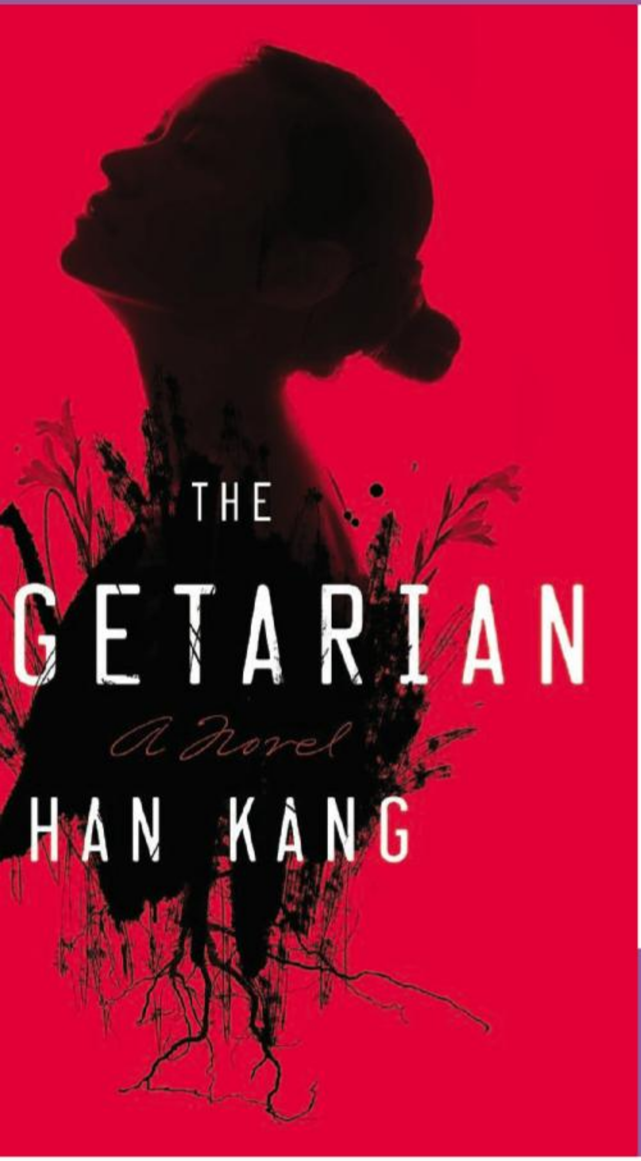
**MOST GORGEOUS REISSUE OF ALL TIME**
The pages of the 50th-anniversary edition of Jacqueline Susann's *Valley of the Dolls* are dyed a luxurious hot pink.

Valley
of the
Dolls

### CAN YOU SPOT THE FAKES?

Not all of these famous authors have made forays into the world of brightly illustrated children's literature. Which books are real—and which ones aren't?

—**MARC SNETIKER**

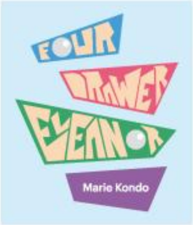


## THE VEGETARIAN

*BY*
HAN KANG

## № 6

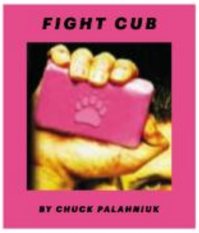
**A YOUNG KOREAN HOUSEWIFE,** "completely unremarkable in every way," wakes up one night and quietly declares that she will no longer touch, prepare, or consume meat. Beholden to a new credo only she understands, Yeong-hye soon begins to withdraw into an impenetrable world of her own, turning refusal into a new kind of religion and whittling her already slim body to skin stretched over bone. Baffled and furious—yet not, for the most part, much concerned for her well-being—her family gathers the full weight of their disapproval: Her father rages; her husband sulks; and her brother-in-law, most disturbingly, preys on Yeong-hye's altered state to feed his own furtive manias. Is her denial driven by spiritual rapture? Psychosomatic illness? Or is it a perfectly sane response to a lifetime of compulsory obedience and quiet desperation? Kang's erotic, unnerving, and utterly mesmerizing novel is far too shrewd to tell. *—Leah Greenblatt*



**1 FOUR-DRAWER ELEANOR**
*Marie Kondo*
The third graders at Clutter Elementary didn't know anything about material purges till SHE came along!

Charlie
THE
Choo-Choo
Beryl Evans

**2 CHARLIE THE CHOO-CHOO**
*Beryl Evans (a.k.a. Stephen King)*
This creepy train–with his menacing, sickly little grin—is guaranteed to induce nightmares.



**3 FIGHT CUB**
*Chuck Palahniuk*
Goldilocks hasn't slept in nine days, so why does she see everything so clearly now?

THE BEST SLEEPOVER EVER
EL JAMES

**4 THE BEST SLEEPOVER EVER**
*E L James*
Toys, dress-up, and her favorite color—how could Ana's perfect night go wrong?!

Elena Ferrante
The Beach at Night

**5 THE BEACH AT NIGHT**
*Elena Ferrante*
A doll abandoned on the beach is tormented by waves, rakes, and a mean lifeguard.

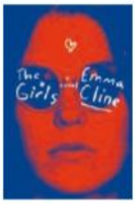
**ANSWER KEY >** 1. FAKE, 2. REAL, 3. FAKE, 4. FAKE, 5. REAL

DUNHAM: D DIPASUPIL/FILMMAGIC; *FIGHT CLUB*: MARY EVANS/FOX 2000 PICTURES/REGENCY PICTURES/
RONALD GRANT/EVERETT COLLECTION; CHILDREN: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

## № 7

### THE GIRLS

*BY* EMMA CLINE



**THE SUMMER OF LOVE** is over, but 14-year-old Evie Boyd's summer of self-discovery has just begun. Lonely and awkward and desperate to connect, she tumbles into the swirling counterculture cauldron of late-'60s California headfirst, finding communion with a freewheeling crew of flower children and misfits on a remote Sonoma County ranch—unaware that their messianic leader, Russell, has his own less utopian goals. Though the clear Manson-family parallels are fascinating, it's Cline's hothouse evocation of girlhood that stays. —*Leah Greenblatt*

## № 8

### THE SUN IS ALSO A STAR

*BY* NICOLA YOON

**FOR THE FIRST FEW** pages, Yoon's second novel—nominated for a National Book Award—reads like a standard-issue story about two teens falling in love. But it soon morphs into a much larger tale about the interconnectedness of the universe, examining the many ways people can affect one another—from simply saying "Thank you" to a stranger, to telling someone you love them. Yoon effortlessly weaves together themes of family, immigration, and sacrifice while also exploring what it means to follow your dreams. —*Nivea Serrao*

## RECOMMENDED READING

By tweeting, sharing, and Instagramming their book picks, celebrities have filled the void left by Oprah. And—no surprise—they're creating buzz and spurring sales.

**EMMA WATSON**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*Mom & Me & Mom*, by Maya Angelou

**TWITTER FOLLOWERS**
23.4 million

**J.K. ROWLING**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*The Girl With the Lower Back Tattoo*, by Amy Schumer

**TWITTER FOLLOWERS**
8.8 million

**EMMA ROBERTS**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*The Guineveres*, by Sarah Domet

**INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS**
8.7 million

**JOHN GREEN**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*The Hate U Give*, by Angie Thomas

**TWITTER FOLLOWERS**
5.2 million

**STEPHEN KING**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*The Nix*, by Nathan Hill

**FACEBOOK LIKES**
4.9 million

**KERRY WASHINGTON**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*The Sprinkles Baking Book*, by Candace Nelson

**INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS**
3.4 million

**SARAH JESSICA PARKER**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*Tintin in Tibet*, by Hergé

**INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS**
3 million

**MINDY KALING**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*A Wrinkle in Time*, by Madeleine L'Engle

**INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS**
2.4 million

**ELIZABETH GILBERT**

**LAST RECOMMENDATION**
*The Way Under the Way*, by Mark Nepo

**FACEBOOK LIKES**
1.7 million

WATSON: FRANZISKA KRUG/GETTY IMAGES; ROWLING: MIKE MARSLAND/WIREIMAGE; ROBERTS: BRIAN ACH/GETTY IMAGES; GREEN: LAURA CAVANAUGH/GETTY IMAGES; KING: SLAVEN VLASIC/GETTY IMAGES; WASHINGTON: LARRY BUSACCA/GETTY IMAGES; PARKER: BRYAN BEDDER/GETTY IMAGES FOR #ACTUALLYSHECAN; KALING: PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES; GILBERT: HEIDI GUTMAN/ABC VIA GETTY IMAGES

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RICHARD BRANSON, *SCREW IT, LET'S DO IT*
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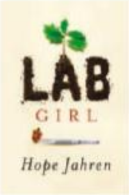
## № 9

### LAB GIRL

BY HOPE JAHREN



**AS A LITTLE GIRL,** Jahren dreamed of beakers, not Barbie dolls. Science was her way out of rural Minnesota, and after earning a Ph.D. at Berkeley she went on to become one of the world's foremost geobiologists: a Fulbright scholar with a coveted professorship at the University of Hawaii and a full mandate to explore her passion for the natural world. This lively, beguiling memoir doesn't skimp on botanical fun facts (oh, the things you'll learn about acorns!), but it's her deeper humanity that telegraphs the pure joy of having a lab of one's own. —*Leah Greenblatt*

## № 10

### EVICTED

BY MATTHEW DESMOND

EVICTED
MATTHEW DESMOND

**THROUGH HARD** work and force of will, you can pull yourself up by your bootstraps in this country. Or can you? It's "only possible if you have a stable home," writes Harvard sociologist Desmond in this stunning examination of eviction and exploitation in inner-city America. His narrative traces the lives of poor people—and their landlords—in urban Milwaukee, showing how evictions gut families and shape urban poverty. No one who reads this will be able to walk away unmoved: It's a powerful, urgent call to action. —*Tina Jordan*

### THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**MOST BIZARRE AUCTION ITEM**

Truman Capote's cremains, ensconced in a wooden Japanese box, sold for $43,750.

**MOST BIZARRE NARRATOR**

The narrator of Ian McEwan's novel *Nutshell* is a fetus.

**BEST EXCUSE FOR A BOOK DELAY**

George R.R. Martin—a tad late with the sixth installment in his Song of Ice and Fire series—said, "Look, I have always had problems with deadlines. For whatever reason, I don't respond well to them."

# THE WORST BOOKS OF THE YEAR

BY — *EW Staff*

1 — **TREASON**
*BY NEWT GINGRICH & PETE EARLEY*

When the current political stage is stranger than fiction, you can't exactly blame us for wanting to avoid a terrorism novel by a politician (and, er, his coauthor, Pete Earley). The only Newt we're interested in hearing from these days has a magic wand and a suitcase full of fantastic beasts.

2 — **FIRST LIGHT**
*BY BILL RANCIC*

The *Apprentice* winner (and husband of E! fashionista Giuliana Rancic) tries—and fails—to beat Nicholas Sparks at his own game with this plane-crash-survival romance with a twist so obvious it's practically visible from the flight. Let's hope *First* is also Rancic's last.

3 — **THE VOYEUR'S MOTEL**
*BY GAY TALESE*

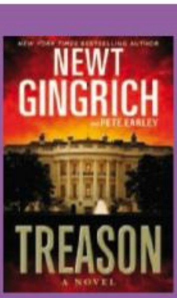
When you're reading a thriller, an unreliable narrator can be sexy and cool. For a serious work of nonfiction? Not so much. Talese's reliance on foggy (and un-fact-checked) memories is just irresponsible.

4 — **BETWEEN TWO WORLDS**
*BY TYLER HENRY*

If you're unaware of Henry, here's a primer: An alleged clairvoyant, he stars on a TV show called *The Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry*—yet feigns ignorance about the actual Hollywood stars who appear on his show. Forgive us for not wanting to experience that icky, fake feeling on the page, too.

5 — **STRONG IS THE NEW BEAUTIFUL**
*BY LINDSEY VONN*

We've been skeptical of the Olympian since she dated Tiger Woods (ugh), but after giving her memoir nearly the same title as Snooki's (*Strong Is the New Sexy*) and Khloé Kardashian's (*Strong Looks Better Naked),* we're really rolling our eyes. You couldn't try a *little* harder?

①


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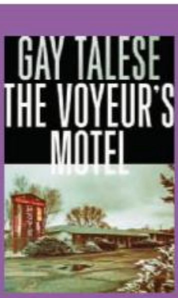

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LINDSEY VONN
STRONG
IS THE NEW BEAUTIFUL

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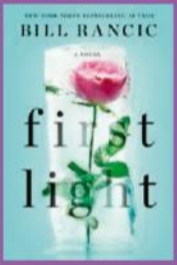

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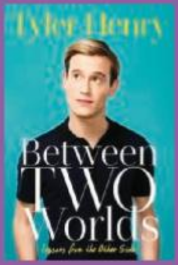

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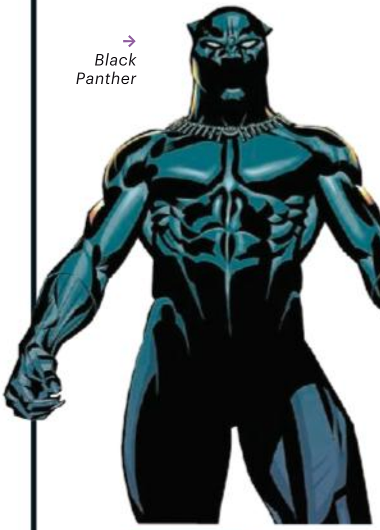
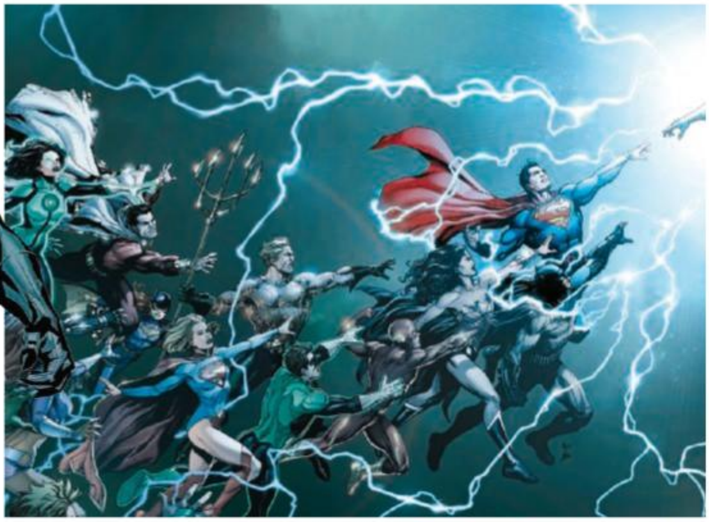
# BEST COMIC BOOKS

IN A YEAR STUFFED WITH INVIGORATED REBOOTS, STELLAR FINALES, AND STUNNING DEBUTS, THESE SERIES STAND OUT. —**CHANCELLOR AGARD, CHRISTIAN HOLUB & NIVEA SERRAO**

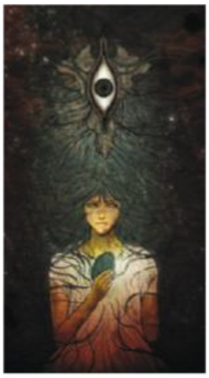


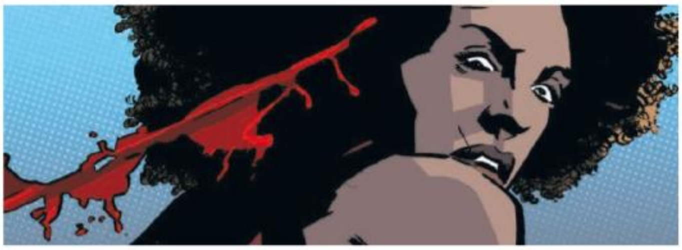
→ *Black Panther*



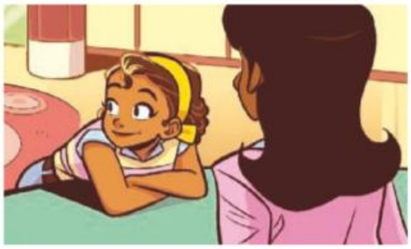
← *DC Universe: Rebirth*

↓ *Monstress*





→ *Bitch Planet*



← *Goldie Vance*

*BEST NEW SERIES*

### BLACK PANTHER

Black Panther had a big year, and this new comic series stands as the highlight. **Ta-Nehisi Coates** used plot threads from Avengers stories to examine Black Panther's dual role as both international superhero and ruler of Wakanda. And artist **Brian Stelfreeze** constructed a beautiful Afro-futurist landscape populated by mystics and feminist warriors. The resulting series was a delight to read each month.

*BEST RETURNING*

### BITCH PLANET

**Kelly Sue DeConnick** and **Valentine De Landro**'s sci-fi riff on '70s prison exploitation films feels as raw and urgent as it did when it debuted in 2014. The focus on "non-compliant" women in a dystopian world lets the series reflect and comment on current events. One of the best aspects of *Planet* is its back pages, which feature letters, essays, and articles by various feminist thinkers.

*BEST REBOOT*

### DC COMICS' REBIRTH

DC Comics underwent a much-needed course correction in 2016. And the results are great: **Patrick Gleason** and **Peter J. Tomasi** are telling a sweet family story in *Superman*; comics legend **Christopher Priest**'s *Deathstroke* is a smart, dense political thriller; and *Green Arrow* is the most fun it's been since Jeff Lemire left the series. If you stopped reading DC in the past five years, now's the time to jump back on board.

*BEST ONGOING*

### MONSTRESS

The gorgeously detailed fictional world of **Marjorie Liu** and **Sana Takeda** reveals itself slowly, piece by piece. Same goes for its enigmatic protagonist, Maika Halfwolf, whose demonic powers and dark backstory are unknown, even to her. *Monstress* presents a spectrum of femininity unique in pop culture: Here, women are sadistic witches, kind smugglers, scared kids, and everything in between.

*BEST ALL-AGES*

### GOLDIE VANCE

It's no mystery why this young detective's series is such a hit. Goldie's can-do attitude and savvy know-how, plus her knack for finding clues, mean she's never far from her next mystery. **Hope Larson**'s writing balances storytelling with emotional stakes, while **Brittney Williams**' art evokes the deco style of 1960s Florida. It's a world you want to visit and an adventure you want to have.

*BLACK PANTHER*: MARVEL; *DC UNIVERSE: REBIRTH*: COURTESY OF DC ENTERTAINMENT; *MONSTRESS*: IMAGE COMICS; *BITCH PLANET*: VALENTINE DE LANDRO & CRIS PETER/IMAGE COMICS; *GOLDIE VANCE*: BOOM! BOX/BOOM! STUDIOS

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Stephen Curry, League MVP

# PODCASTS

## *THE* YEAR'S BEST PODCASTS

BY — *EW STAFF*

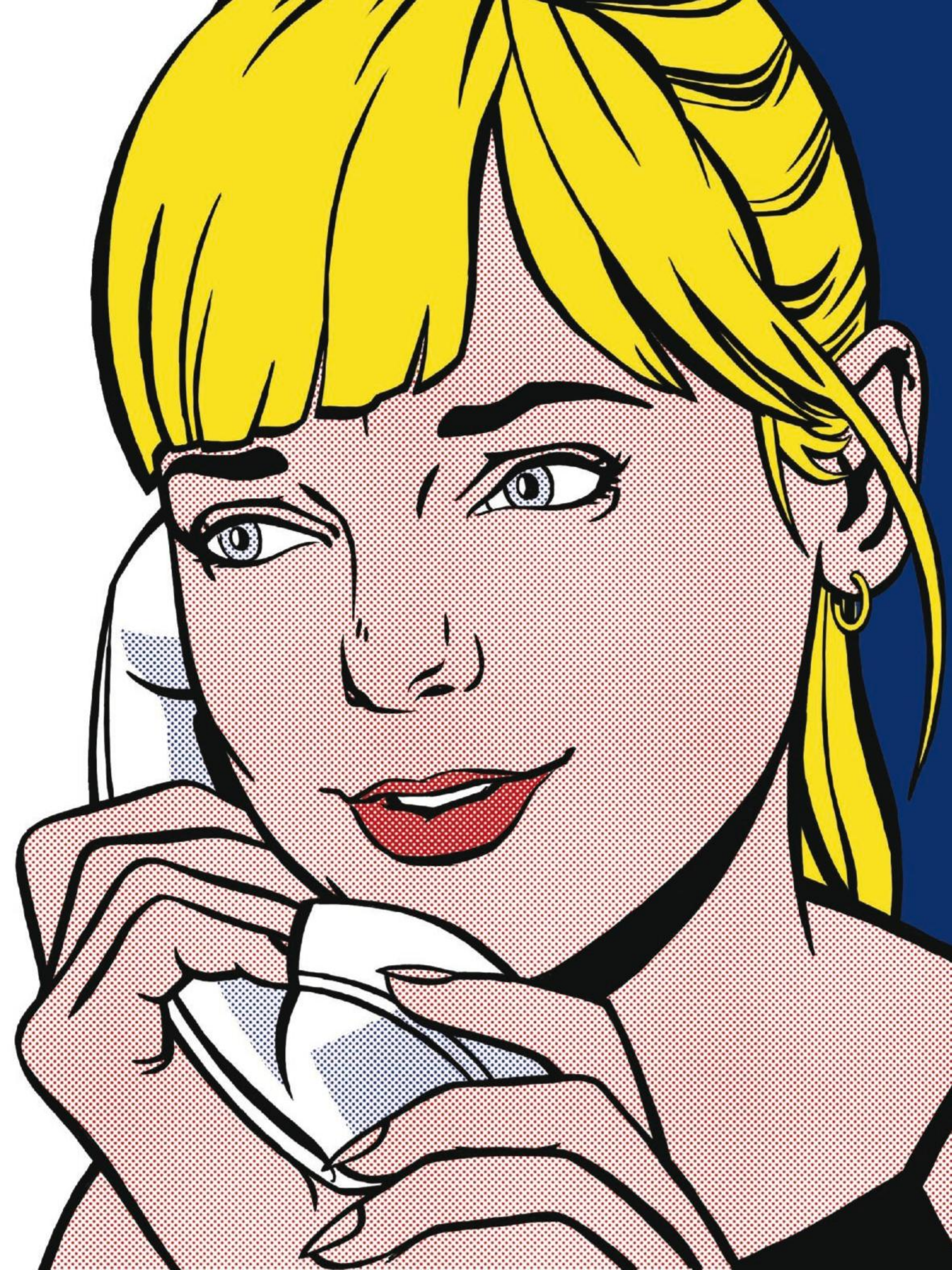
### ANNA FARIS IS UNQUALIFIED

*ANNA FARIS*

№ 1

**CELEBRITIES HOSTING THEIR OWN PODCASTS ISN'T EXACTLY A NEW** concept. However, Anna Faris joined the growing medium and quickly dominated the comedy-podcast charts with her refreshingly candid opinions and self-deprecating conversations with famous friends. What began as a show about listeners getting "not-great relationship advice from completely unqualified Hollywood types" has become a modern-day variety show of sorts, with a who's-who of guests each week (including an occasional cameo by husband Chris Pratt). Faris exudes an infectious charm in awkward bits and far-fetched improv exercises, like when she makes her guests pitch hilariously awful movie remakes to the eccentric studio-head character she's developed named Karen Sarducci (who is mother to two children: Milo and Ventimiglia). But beyond the funny, it is the window into Faris' life away from the cameras—and the actress' knack for making each listener feel like one of her best friends—that gives her podcast such an intimate feel. For someone who doesn't think she's skilled enough to dole out sound advice, Faris has proved she's well worth a weekly standing appointment. *—Cristina Everett*

*ILLUSTRATION BY*
**LÆMEUR**



## 2 — MY FAVORITE MURDER

KAREN KILGARIFF & GEORGIA HARDSTARK

It's not easy to turn an unfunny subject into a hilarious series that tugs at the heartstrings each week. But these comedians, who have developed a following of die-hard fans dubbed "murderinos," tell tales of cold cases and gruesome killings that leave you questioning why you're dying to hear more. *—Jessica Goodman*

## 3 — KEEPIN' IT 1600

JON FAVREAU, DAN PFEIFFER, JON LOVETT & TOMMY VIETOR

The Obama bros take their years with POTUS to the recording studio, where they dissect the biggest political issues and catastrophes with progressive commentary. While they warned against "bedwetting" in their preelection coverage, their post–Nov. 8 episodes have been the most illuminating, making this entry a true must-listen in the months to come. *—Jessica Goodman*

## 4 — IN THE DARK

MADELEINE BARAN

A standout addition to the true-crime wave, Baran and APM Reports examine the 1989 Jacob Wetterling abduction. A suspect confessed as part of a plea deal this year, giving the host's reporting of the rampant investigative failures and controversial legislation that arose from Jacob's disappearance added gravitas. *—Allison Sadlier*

↓ *2 Dope Queens'* Jessica Williams and Phoebe Robinson

### THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**BEST NARRATION**
Strangers' stories of love and loss just sound better when told by celebs on *Modern Love.*

wbur
Modern Love

**MOST AWKWARD CONCEPT**
Making a podcast like *My Dad Wrote a Porno* is at least cheaper than therapy.

MY DAD WROTE A Porno

**BEST USE OF SNARK**
*Who? Weekly* has the answer for all those times you wonder what Rita Ora is up to.

↓ Casey Wilson and Danielle Schneider of *Bitch Sesh*

## 5 — BITCH SESH: A REAL HOUSEWIVES BREAKDOWN

CASEY WILSON & DANIELLE SCHNEIDER

The duo punch up their hysterical recaps of the latest *Real Housewives* episodes with a wine-induced gossip session that leaves you wanting another round. *—Allison Sadlier*

## 6 — LORE

AARON MAHNKE

Truth can often be much scarier than fiction—something Mahnke proves as he dives deep into the world of folklore and the darker side of history in a quest to root out the fragment of truth at the bottom of our fears. *—Nivea Serrao*

## 7 — THE WEST WING WEEKLY

JOSHUA MALINA & HRISHIKESH HIRWAY

Name a TV show and there's bound to be a handful of podcasts devoted solely to it. But few are cohosted by someone who actually *starred* on the series. On *WWW*, Malina—who played Will Bailey on the political drama—breaks down each episode of the Aaron Sorkin series with the help of Hirway, sharing stories from the set while chatting with fellow cast and crew members. *—Cristina Everett*

## 8 — 2 DOPE QUEENS

JESSICA WILLIAMS & PHOEBE ROBINSON

No topic is off-limits for these funny friends who perform in front of a live audience in Brooklyn and share their personal takes on race, sex, life in New York, and random pop culture obsessions like Harry Potter and Bono. *—Danielle Jackson*

## 9 — BEAUTIFUL STORIES FROM ANONYMOUS PEOPLE

CHRIS GETHARD

An exciting experiment full of hidden gems, the show has only two rules for anonymous callers: The phone line will close after one hour, and Gethard is not allowed to hang up first. What you hear is the host's uncanny ability to find the extraordinary in ordinary people. *—Cristina Everett*

## 10 — SCIENCE VS

WENDY ZUKERMAN

In a year dominated by fake news and "post-truth" politics, Wendy Zukerman's work has never been more relevant. The science podcast examines modern fads, in topics ranging from gun control to the G-spot, and pits them against facts supported by rigorous research and interviews with experts. *—Cristina Everett*

*2 DOPE QUEENS:* AMY PEARL/WNYC STUDIOS

*BITCH SESH* PHOTOGRAPH BY **SAM COMEN**

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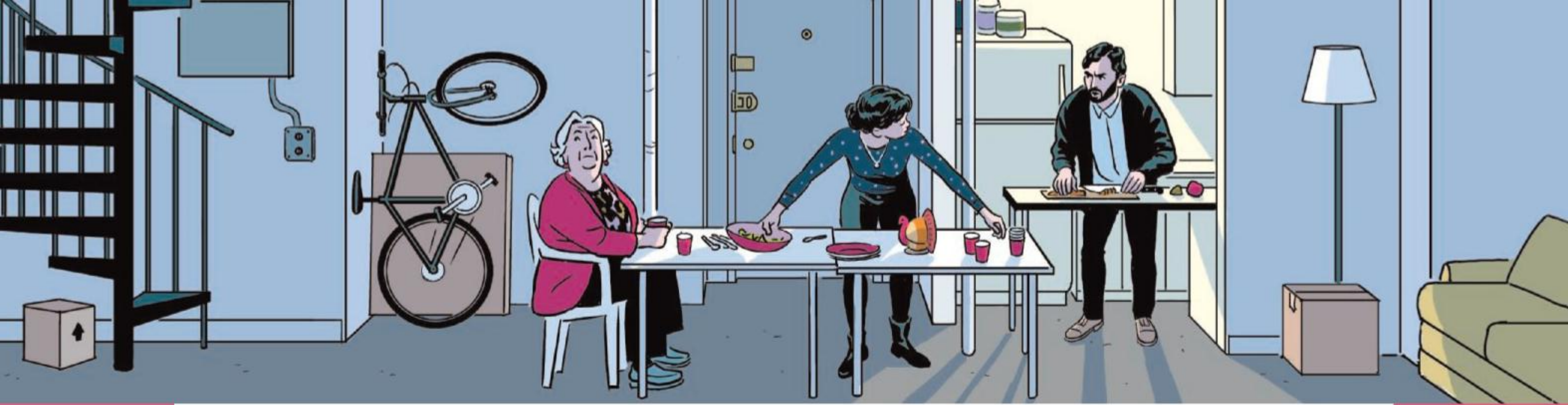
# STAGE



# THE YEAR'S BEST BROADWAY SHOWS

BY — *Marc Snetiker* ( @MarcSnetiker )
*Melissa Rose Bernardo* ( @mrbplus )

## THE HUMANS

*BY* STEPHEN KARAM

No. 1

**THE HARROWING ECHOES OF** the WTC attack and its effects on a fading patriarch underscore this brutally simple story of a New York family's Thanksgiving dinner, wherein years of careful stitches threaten to burst loose and the tension simmers like stuffing in a crockpot. Audiences feel comfortable-cum-voyeuristic, bearing witness to something that rings wholly familiar yet still feels blatantly, distressingly private. Unlike many purveyors of the "dinner-party play," Pulitzer Prize finalist Stephen Karam manages to imbue his Broadway debut with abundant tenderness even when the piece hits its height of thoughtful terror (a wordless montage of a shaken 9/11 griever plunged into sudden darkness). Bolstered by winning performances from stage nobility Reed Birney and Jayne Houdyshell, this Tony-winning Best Play offered both a heartache and a delicate text that linger. Human, indeed, is the play's nuanced grasp of how a family can refuse to let themselves be broken and simultaneously know that they already are. —*Marc Snetiker*

*ILLUSTRATION BY*
R. KIKUO JOHNSON

↓ Pascale Armand, Lupita Nyong'o, and Saycon Sengbloh in *Eclipsed*

### 2 — FALSETTOS

*BOOK BY* WILLIAM FINN
& JAMES LAPINE,
*MUSIC & LYRICS BY*
WILLIAM FINN

These characters—"Homosexuals. Women with children. Short insomniacs"—are quirky, annoying, and endearing. Still, who knew a decades-old project that started as a pair of one-acts about a gay man coming to terms with his sexuality in the Reagan era would be just what we needed now? *—Melissa Rose Bernardo*

### 3 — BRIGHT STAR

*BOOK BY* STEVE MARTIN,
*MUSIC BY* STEVE MARTIN
& EDIE BRICKELL,
*LYRICS BY* EDIE BRICKELL

Some stars burn out but leave an unforgettable glow, and that's what happened here: A bluegrass tuner tugged at the heart, begot a theater full of tapping feet, and introduced audiences to the ferociously affecting Carmen Cusack. *—MS*

### 4 — NOISES OFF

*BY* MICHAEL FRAYN

If you adored Andrea Martin as a trapeze-swinging grandma in 2013's *Pippin*, you should've seen her with a plate of sardines in this unbreakable backstage farce. Elevating prop comedy to high art, Martin & Co. proved it takes smarts to play a bunch of door-slamming dimwits. *—MRB*

### 5 — SHE LOVES ME

*BOOK BY* JOE MASTEROFF,
*MUSIC BY* JERRY BOCK,
*LYRICS BY* SHELDON HARNICK

Deliciousness doesn't come much sweeter than this old-fashioned Broadway musical, revived with captivating care by do-no-wrong director Scott Ellis. Laura Benanti shines as the title's sublime "she," with Zachary Levi offering a divine counterbalance of charm as the "me" in the equation. *—MS*

### 6 — LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT

*BY* EUGENE O'NEILL

Here's an American horror story: A washed-up actor (Gabriel Byrne), his alcoholic son (Michael Shannon), and his tubercular brother (John Gallagher Jr.) drink and quarrel about their druggie mom (a transporting Jessica Lange). And drink. And drink. Yet we couldn't look away. *—MRB*

### 7 — DEAR EVAN HANSEN

*BOOK BY* STEVEN LEVENSON,
*MUSIC & LYRICS BY* BENJ
PASEK & JUSTIN PAUL

Anyone who's ever been, as the title character sings, "on the outside always looking in" will relate to this musical about an anxiety-ridden high schooler (*Pitch Perfect*'s Ben Platt, who's just that) struggling to connect with everyone. *—MRB*

### 8 — WAITRESS

*BOOK BY* JESSIE NELSON,
*MUSIC & LYRICS BY*
SARA BAREILLES

Dear baby: When you're old enough, beg for a play-by-play of Jessie Mueller's heartbreaking star turn as an ambitious small-town waitress who, for all her woes, has at least one thing going for her—a truly sweet score by Sara Bareilles in her Broadway songwriting debut. *—MS*

### 9 — ECLIPSED

*BY* DANAI GURIRA

Lupita Nyong'o's Broadway debut was the headline appeal, but no play's cast had more combustive ensemble firepower than the five women of Danai Gurira's scorching drama about sex slaves dreaming of their pasts before a brutal civil war. *—MS*

### 10 — THE CRUCIBLE

*BY* ARTHUR MILLER

British star Ben Whishaw executed an astonishing breakdown eight times a week as the valiant, falsely accused John Proctor in this classic Salem-witch-trial drama, which director Ivo van Hove revived in a flawed but fearless revival set in a contemporary classroom. *—MS*

↓ Christian Borle and Andrew Rannells in *Falsettos*

## THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

### MOST IRONIC TITLE

*Tuck Everlasting*, the musical about immortal life, closed after just two months.

### LEAST IRONIC TITLE

*Shuffle Along* did exactly that soon after star Audra McDonald went on maternity leave.

### THE BETTY BUCKLEY "MEMORY" MEMORIAL

Try as she might, *Cats* headliner Leona Lewis didn't erase the memory of a better performance.

*ECLIPSED, FALSETTOS*: JOAN MARCUS (2); *TUCK EVERLASTING*: GREG MOONEY; *SHUFFLE ALONG*: JULIETA CERVANTES; *CATS*: MATTHEW MURPHY

## THE *HAMILTON* SATISFACTION SCALE

THE HISTORY HIT FOUND ITS WAY INTO POP CULTURE, FOR BETTER OR WORSE. —**MARC SNETIKER**

SATISFIED

**"CARPOOL KARAOKE"** Lin-Manuel Miranda joined Broadway vets like James Corden and Audra McDonald for the most *Misérables* car ride ever.

**#HAM4HAM** The 10-dollar-ticket lottery became a destination thanks to these mini-shows, which *almost* made up for not winning.

**MIRANDA DOES *SNL*** This episode featured strong comic work from the first-time host and copious musical-theater references.

**HASHTAG HIGH JINKS** Twitter—and Miranda himself—went mad for memes, mashing up *Hamilton* with *Star Wars*, *Parks and Rec*, and more.

**COLONIAL CHIC** Be it Barbra's Burr at the Tony Awards or SJP's waify Met Gala waistcoat, these fashionistas deserve a revolt.

***MODERN FAMILY*** Manny (Rico Rodriguez) parodied the show for a rapping college app that—surprise—*didn't* get him into Juilliard.

**MIKE PENCE** The cast caught conservative flak with a plea for equal rights to the VP-elect (who has a lengthy anti-LGBT record).

HELPLESS

"CARPOOL KARAOKE": CBS; *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*: WILL HEATH/NBC; DARTH VADER: © & TM LUCASFILM LTD.; STREISAND: KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES FOR TONY AWARDS PRODUCTIONS; PARKER: TAYLOR HILL/FILMMAGIC; PENCE: DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES

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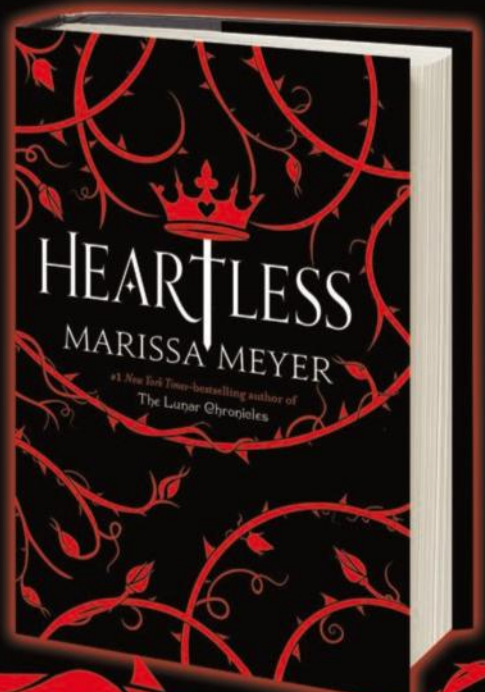
"Full of heart."
—GREGORY MAGUIRE, BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *WICKED*

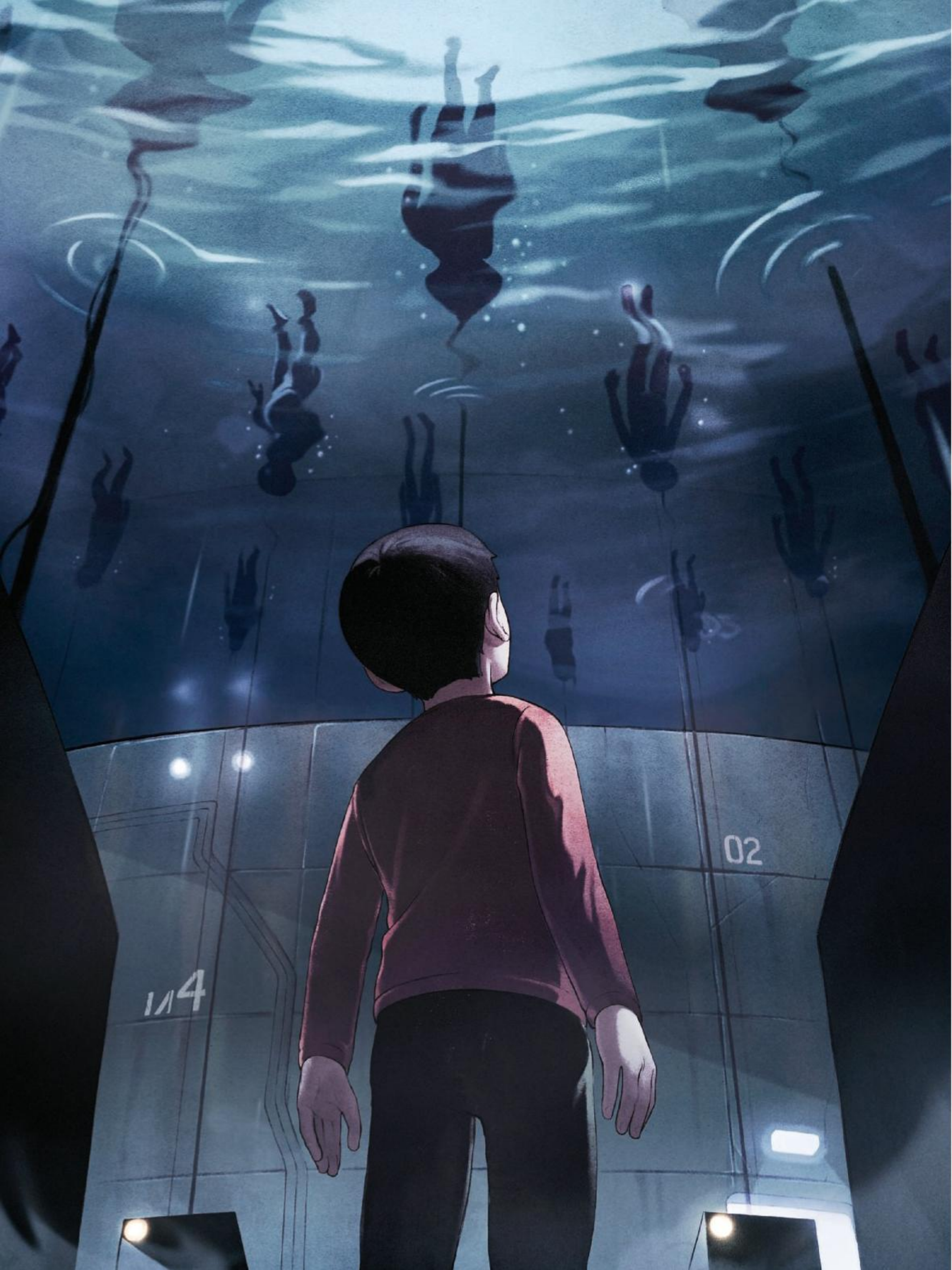
"What Gregory Maguire did for the Wicked Witch, Meyer does for Lewis Carroll's Queen of Hearts."
—*PEOPLE*

"Meyer evokes the best whimsies from Lewis Carroll's classic while giving the Queen of Hearts a backstory that may soften her most fearful haters."
—*ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY*

#DEFYDESTINY

FEIWEL AND FRIENDS

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# GAMES

## *THE* YEAR'S BEST GAMES

BY — *Darren Franich* (@DarrenFranich)
*Aaron Morales* (@airlinem)

### INSIDE

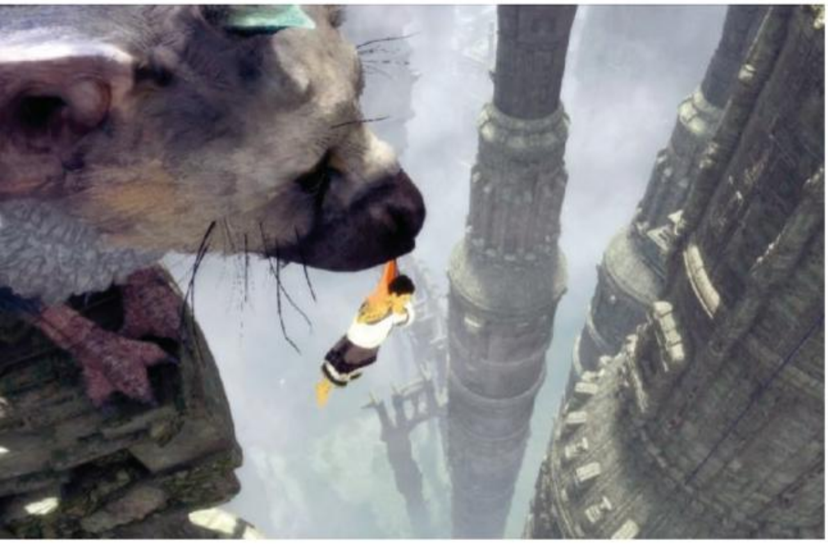
*MULTIPLATFORM*

No 1

**I WILL NEVER GET OVER THE ENDING OF *INSIDE*. IN THE BEST GAME OF** the year, you control a little boy in a red shirt. He wanders through a forest, a farm, a city. Men chase him, if they're men. The scenes veer fantastical—with floating graveyards and a World's Fair aquatica lit up green space-age neon—suggesting an ancient myth from millennia, hence about our modern world. Developer Playdead is based in Copenhagen, so there's an easy moody-Danes joke here: What if Ingmar Bergman invented *Super Mario*? But nothing's easy about *Inside*—not the brain-tickling puzzles, not the paranoid imagery. My theory: *Inside* is about 2016, a year so haunted by death and politics that these past 12 months felt like individual iron bars in a cell made of history. It became a common refrain: Can this year just *end* already? There is a moment, very late in *Inside*, where you break through a final barrier. Call it a wall, or call it Dec. 31. But by then, you no longer have any clear sense where you have been going; you don't even know what you are anymore. The final image of *Inside* is a tantalizing mystery. At long last, you're outside, wherever that is. *—Darren Franich*

*ILLUSTRATION BY*
**KEVIN HONG**

↓ *The Last Guardian*



## 2 — DISHONORED 2

*MULTIPLATFORM*

From its tense opening moments, *Dishonored 2* is all about player choice. Do I choose returning hero Corvo or grown-up daughter Emily? Am I a nonlethal ghost who lurks in the shadows or a blade-wielding whirling dervish of destruction? Your choices reverberate throughout the story—with rats, bloodflies, and disease increasing with the chaos you create. Fortunately, both play styles are equally enthralling, making the choice of playing it through twice the easiest one of all. *—Aaron Morales*

## 3 — THE LAST GUARDIAN

*PLAYSTATION 4*

*The Last Guardian* was supposed to be a contender for game of the year, 2011. For a while, it looked as if it might never see the light of day. Thankfully, Fumito Ueda's spiritual successor to *Ico* and *Shadow of the Colossus*, about a young boy who befriends a strange beast, lives up to its pedigree. Trico truly feels like a living creature, and bonding with him to traverse the game's crumbling world is one of the year's most fantastic, fantastical journeys. *—AM*

## 4 — TITANFALL 2

*MULTIPLATFORM*

The sequel to the multiplayer-only shooter expands on the wonderful tension between hyper-agile Pilots and powerful Titans by adding a wildly inventive single-player story mode that pushes each play style to its limit. Respawn Entertainment takes more cues from *Half-Life* and *Portal* than *Call of Duty* to deliver one of the most memorable campaigns of the year. Surprisingly for a first-person shooter, *Titanfall 2* might be at its best when it's a platformer, but the shooting hits its mark, too. *—AM*

## 5 — FIREWATCH

*MULTIPLATFORM*

Rich Sommer gives the videogame performance of the year as Henry, a melancholy loner fleeing personal tragedy in the remote Wyoming wilderness. There's the woman on the radio, that curious fence, those missing campers, a backpack someone lost, a forest fire on the horizon. It's never clear whether you're living through a dark romance or a sun-dappled noir—and whether Henry is a hero or a patsy. *—DF*

## 6 — UNCHARTED 4: A THIEF'S END

*PLAYSTATION 4*

Nathan Drake has been running, jumping, and quipping his way through collapsing buildings and ancient ruins since 2007, and *Uncharted 4* continues the swashbuckling action with some of the series' most memorable set pieces. The story packs an emotional wallop because we've spent 10 years with these characters. If this truly is this thief's end, then it's one hell of a send-off. *—AM*

## 7 — REZ INFINITE

*PLAYSTATION VR*

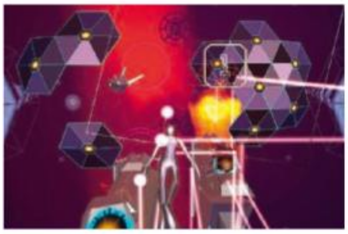
Who would have thought that a 15-year-old Sega Dreamcast game would be the PSVR killer app? *Infinite* is more than an HD remake—it's everything the rhythm-action game always aspired to be, finally fully realized in virtual reality. *Rez* has always been a transportive experience. In VR, it's a transcendent one. *—AM*

## 8 — THE WITNESS

*MULTIPLATFORM*

Eight years after Jonathan Blow mainstreamed the indie-game movement with *Braid*, he returned with this devotional homage to the CD-ROM point-and-click-and-ponder adventure. Mysterious island, check. Frustratingly difficult puzzles, check. Radical combination of cerebral ennui and sensual delight, check. In 2016, no game was harder, nor more rewarding. *—DF*

↓ *Rez Infinite*



## THERE OUGHTA BE AN AWARD FOR

**BEST REASON TO GO OUTSIDE**

*Pokémon GO* puts the Fitbit to shame.

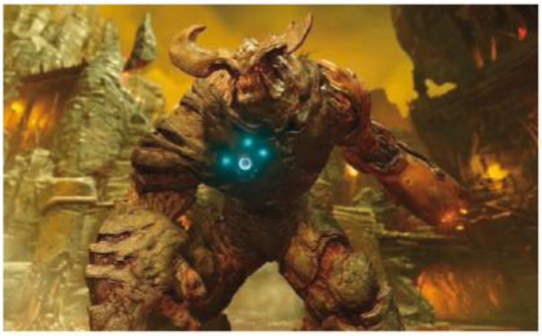
**MOST IMMERSIVE VR GAME**

*Batman: Arkham VR* has you reaching for batarangs.

**MOST NAUSEATING VR GAME**

*PlayStation VR Worlds'* "Scavengers Odyssey" has you reaching for Dramamine.

↓ *Doom*



## 9 — DOOM

*MULTIPLATFORM*

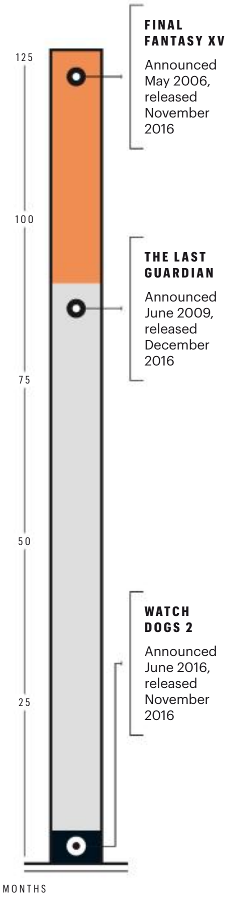
This reboot of the 1993 shooter has no right to be as good as it is, but *Doom* recaptures everything that was great about that classic and brings it screaming into the present. The story is inconsequential, as *Doom* is all about murdering hell demons in the most graphic way possible, and it's positively exhilarating. Developer id Software satisfied the most basic urges, needs, and desires of our id, and delivered the most visceral experience of the year. *—AM*

## 10 — NO MAN'S SKY

*PLAYSTATION 4, PC*

Creator Sean Murray promised the cosmos—18 quintillion planets!—but for many, the big swing was a big whiff, a half-finished boondoggle about the joys of inventory management. But beneath the hype is one of our era's curiosities: an artisanally handmade art game trying to be a AAA shooter RPG, a math-rock space opera about the infinite possibilities of outer-space flora and fauna. A new expansion beckons; we haven't seen *Sky*'s ceiling yet. *—DF*

**MONTHS BETWEEN GAME ANNOUNCEMENT AND RELEASE DATE**



**FINAL FANTASY XV**
Announced May 2006, released November 2016

**THE LAST GUARDIAN**
Announced June 2009, released December 2016

**WATCH DOGS 2**
Announced June 2016, released November 2016

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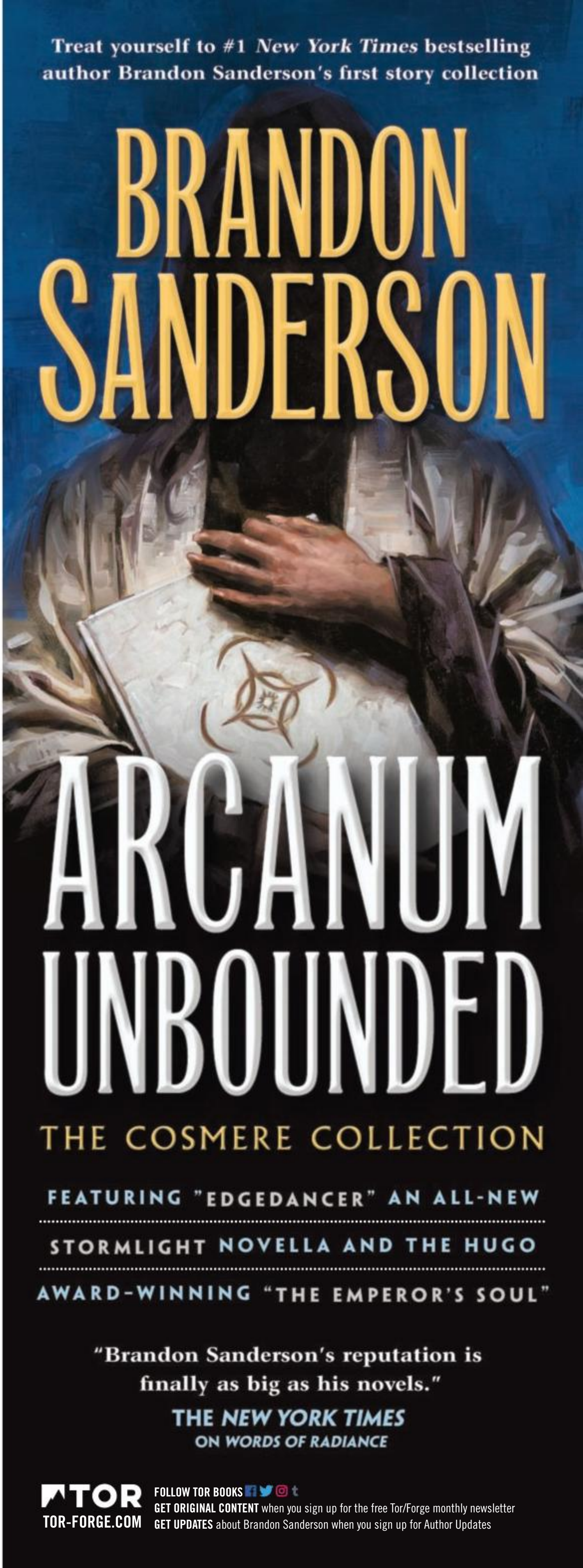
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### THE YEAR-END EDITION

# The BULLSEYE

BY **MARC SNETIKER** *@MARCSNETIKER*

Fuller Louse

Wanna know how we got so scarred?

Blue was *not* the warmest color.

America's next top ~~model dancer~~ ~~Instagram star~~ boyfriend

Thought Chewbacca Mom would go away? Wookiee mistake.

Wow, who could have guessed that the last four words of *Gilmore Girls* would be "Mom, bring back *Bunheads*"?

Hip-hop + Broadway just might be the best pairing of words since Lin + Manuel.

**As far as breakout characters go, *Stranger Things* officially raised the Barb.**

After a messy breakup, it's clear who got full custody of our attention.

And just like that, the curse was lifted, and everyone in the kingdom was happy again. Except Amy Adams.

Dear Grim Reaper, How about taking the year off? Love, 2017

Did *Pokémon GO* actually happen, or was the augmented reality INSIDE US ALL ALONG?

Snapchat in 2016: Come for the dog filters, stay for Kim Kardashian's shocking investigative exposés of Taylor Swift.

When life gives you lemons, make lemonade. When life gives you *Lemonade*, make room on every one of your playlists.

We're so in love with Maeve from *Westworld*, we're already finishing each other's sentiences!

Work work work work work = trying to decipher Rihanna's lyrics

Something has gone horribly wrong when an episode of *Black Mirror* is less scary than the real world.

*SUICIDE SQUAD*: CLAY ENOS/WARNER BROS.; NYLE DIMARCO: DENISE TRUSCELLO/WIREIMAGE; *STRANGER THINGS*: NETFLIX; PRINCE: RICHARD E. AARON/GETTY IMAGES; DAVID BOWIE: MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES; KELLY RIPA: MARK DAVIS/GETTY IMAGES; *WESTWORLD*: JOHN P. JOHNSON/HBO; *BLACK MIRROR*: DAVID DETTMANN/NETFLIX; RIHANNA: KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES FOR FENTY CORP.; POKEMON GO: THE POKEMON COMPANY INTERNATIONAL; LEONARDO DICAPRIO: DAN MACMEDAN/WIREIMAGE; *HAMILTON*: THEO WARGO/WIREIMAGE; *GILMORE GIRLS: A YEAR IN THE LIFE*: SAEED ADYANI/NETFLIX; *X-MEN: APOCALYPSE*: FOX; *FULLER HOUSE*: ROBERT TRACHTENBERG/NETFLIX

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